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CANTONESE APOTHEGMS,

Classified, translated, & commented upon

BY

Rev. H. J. Stevens,

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PREFACE.

The writer issues this little book with its limitations to the general public not without the hope that it may prove interesting to the general reader and helpful to the student of Cantonese.

With respect to the material which the writer has classified, translated, and commented upon where necessary, quite the greater part was courteously supplied by two friends :—Mr. Chan of Fatshan and Deputy Li Tat Shuk of Canton.

Obligations to Drs. Legge and Eitel, and also to Rev. J. Macgowan for dates and a few techincal terms are gratefully acknowledged.

The Romanization and translation of each Chinese character which precede the proper renderings of the phrases in English cannot be taken as affording any real guide to the pronunciation of Chinese since every character has its own tone which can only be learned from a teacher. The system of Romanization followed is that adopted by Dr. Eitel in his "Cantonese Dictionary."

This extra work of translating word for word was undertaken upon the advice of a friend who suggested that it would lend additional interest as giving some insight into the construction of the language.

Canton, December 30th, 1902.

H. J. S.

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CANTONESE APOTHEGMS

CUSTOMS.

為皇必要遵孔教: Wai wong pit iú tsun Hung Káu.

Become Emperor certainly must follow Hung [*] (Mandarin dialect, K'ung) religion.

"To be Emperor (of China) it is absolutely necessary to be a Confucianist."

The significance of this article of every scholar's faith lies not so much in the fact, that the Chinese Emperors and feudal princes have ollowed the doctrines of Confucius for a

[*] The name Confucius is derived from 孔夫子 (K'ung Foo Tsz) which translated means, K'ung Master, *i. e.* the surname followed by a title equivalent to the Hebrew "Rabbi."

period of more than *two thousand years, as in the more striking truth that such has been the hold of the great Sage upon the hearts and minds of the literati, the ruling class, that conquering invaders have found it essential, in order to enjoy the fruits of conquest, to adopt Confucianism. Hence, though the famous Mongol conqueror, Kublai, a Buddhist, who inaugurated the 元 (Ün) dynasty (A. D. 1280-1368) and constructed the Grand Canal, did not enjoin Confucianism upon his own royal household and Mongol subjects, yet this was one of the first things, that occupied the attention of his successor. In the same way the early Emperors of this present Manchu dynasty wisely retained and adopted the cult and teachings of Confucius.

The phrase, therefore, that we have cited, is neither an empty boast, nor a foolish superstition, but a generalization drawn from the nation's history, and at the same time it is

* Confucius was first worshipped during the 晉 (Tsun) dynasty (B. C. 255–209).

a glowing tribute to the wonderful absorbing power of the Chinese race.

打地氣: Ta ti hi:—Beat earth air.

"To breathe the atmosphere which arises from the ground."

This refers to the practice of the people of sleeping on the street adjoining the Shing-Wong-Miá temple in Canton city on the eve of the 24th day of the 7th moon (it generally falls in August). In the first instance men and women thus slept on available spaces in the vicinity of the temple with a view to being first at the shrine in the morning, as the idol was supposed to acknowledge the first incense burned before it with abundant favours.

Now, however, it is believed, that there is virtue in the very act of sleeping in the open near the temple, and that by so doing the torments of Hades may be avoided.

來往必行右: Loi wong pit hang yau.
Come go must walk right.

"In going out and coming in you must keep to the right."

Inside the outer door of every Chinese house there are two entrances formed by the spaces left by a screen, or large folding doors, placed across the centre of the courtyard.

擇日還神: Chák yat wán shan.
Choose day thank idol.

"Choose a (lucky) day to present thank offerings to the idols."

It would be considered "a flying in the face of providence" to worship, marry, build or bury save on the lucky days marked in the Almanac, or on those specially divined by the astrologers, and geomancers.

買番人鎗炮彈番人; Mái fán-yan
ts'eung p'áu tán fán-yan.
Buy barbarian rifles cannon shoot barbarian.

"The barbarian's rifles and cannons are bought to shoot barbarians."

It was iterated and reiterated as a sage remark during the troubles of 1900, that the European nations, in permitting as they had done, the wholesale importation of arms into China, had been preparing a rod for their own backs. That the Chinese also hold this view is abundantly clear from the above statement.

三從四德: Sám ts'ung sz tak.

Three followings four virtues.

"The three subordinations and the four virtues."

These are the jewels in a woman's crown. In her own home a woman subordinates herself to her father, in the home of her adoption to her husband, and in her home after her husband's death to her sons. The four virtues are as follows: Goodness, Purity, Usefulness, and Modesty.

Here we have the position of women in China well defined. Experience teaches, however, that theory and practice do not coincide, and that, though there is very little in the theory to which one can take exception, the practice leaves much to be desired.

I have no doubt that it was failure to attain to the prescribed ideal ; or, as the Celestial would say, want of conformity to this rule of propriety, which originally led to the separation of the sexes.

師姑札褲脚: Sz-kú chát fú kéuk.

Nun binds skirt foot.

"Nuns bind their divided skirts round their ankles."

They are thus easily distinguished from ordinary women, who allow their skirts to hang loose.

築基圍要人做底: Chuk ki-wai iú yan tsò tai.

Construct embankment need man make bottom.

"In building a river bank, (or, making new ground like the foreign concession, Canton) a (living) person must constitute the foundation."

That is to say, no other foundation would hold. Till this day the Chinese believe that a woman was buried beneath the Shameen by those who undertook its construction.

如假包換: 'U ká páu ún

If false guarantee change.

"If (the goods) are false, we guarantee to change them."

A sign-board with these words engraved thereon is hung up outside certain shops such, *e.g.* as those which sell jade and silver.

秘傳教媳不教女: Pi ch'ün káu sik pat káu nü.

Secrets transmit teach daughter-in-law not teach daughter.

"Secret (heirlooms of special knowledge, handicraft, or witchcraft) should be transmitted and taught to one's daughter-in-law, but not to one's daughter."

How far this custom is adhered to, it is difficult to ascertain: but the reason is evident. Whatever knowledge the daughter may obtain will go out of the family when the marries. There is no provision made here for unmarried daughters, and observation, apart from special investigation, would lead one to suppose, that there are indeed very few girls in China who choose, or are allowed to choose, to remain spinsters.

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減贈幾天: Kám tsang ki t'in.

Reduce give-away several days.

"Great reductions for a few days only."

Though, perhaps, not so common as in Western countries, yet the Chinese shop-keepers hold their clearance sales.

倒油與荳腐要旺街: Tò yau ù tau fú iu wong kái.

Spill oil with bean curd must flourish street.

"If oil or bean-curd be spilled the street must be made to flourish."

Crackers are fired to bring back good luck.

井水不許外人取: Tsing shúi pat hü ngoi yan ts'u.

Well water not allow outside men take.

"You may not permit others to draw water from your well."

Unwritten laws are often more binding than those to which penalties are attached, and the one translated above is very seldom infringed.

打鵪鶉: Tá òm ch'un.
Fight Quails.
"Quail fighting."

This is one of the favourite and cruel pastimes of the Chinese: but it is not nearly so fashionable as cricket fighting, since crickets will fight to the death.

生菜會: Shang ts'oi úi.
Fresh vegetables Guild.
"The Fresh Vegetables (Guild) Association."

Once a year married couples, to whom heaven has not granted off-spring, go by boat to a temple not far from Canton, and there worship an idol and bring back with them, a vegetable, and from this the association derives its name.

敬字紙不敬字祖: King tsz chi pat king tsz tso.

Reverence character paper not reverence character ancestor.

"Men reverence paper with characters (written or printed) thereon, but do not revere the inventor of characters."

As is generally known, all paper on which has been inscribed the sacred characters (hieroglyphs) is carefully placed on one side and burnt. It would be the height of derogation and irreverence to use such paper for any purpose but that for which it was originally intended. Hence not only are there receptacles here and there at street corners in towns and cities, where printed or written matter is burned: but the writer has many times seen men, sent by the Sacred Edict, or Benevolent Halls' fraternity with long baskets, collecting from the shops in the city that which has been put by for them.

The phrase quoted above, however, shows the folly of paying such respect to the character, while the inventor of writing is entirely forgotten and overlooked. The Chinese are fully aware, that in this case they have departed from the general usage, *e. g.* they do not worship the implements, but the father of agriculture.

至止: Chi chí.
Best stop.
"Many the best stop here."

The above two characters, written or printed on a slip of paper, are pasted over the doorway, or on the walls of a house on the last day of the old year.

執骨: Chap kwat.
Pick up bones.
"Disinter bones"

This * practice is strictly illegal; but in connection with *fung shui* (geomancy) it is freely indulged in malgré the threats of the law.

雨帽寫大字: 'Ü mò sé tái tsz.
Rain hat write large character.
"Rain-hats have large characters written on them."

That is, the name of the wearer or his shop or firm.

病人起卦: Peng yan hi kwá.
Sick man raises diagram.
"A sick person takes up the diagrams, *i. e.* divines."

* Vide chapter on Geomancy.

The meaning of the phrase is, that the relatives inquire of the astrologers and magicians, whether the patient will live or die, and that these men consult the diagrams in order to find an answer.

婦人裹脚: Fú-yan kwo keuk.

Women bandage feet.

"Women bind their feet."

The tortures inflicted by this cruel custom, the tears it has wrung from the sufferers, and the piercing cries that have gone up from the victims for deliverance, may best be judged from the fact, that the measurement of several pairs of shoes discarded by Chinese ladies, who, in consequence of becoming Christians, have unbound their feet and presented their shoes to the foreign lady, who had taught them, proved $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches to be the greatest length from toe to heel. As the heels, however, slope inwards, the *soles* were from one half to a whole inch shorter still. I am assured that many are much smaller.

One of the incentives to the sufferer to submit to the practice is that with natural feet her chance of marrying into a good family would be infinitesimal, if not nil, for small feet are a

sign of gentility. The age of five is the usual time, when the feet are first bound with the bandage five Chinese feet long (*i. e.* about two English yards): but there is no definite rule in the matter.

Some mothers and foster-mothers even go the cruel length of placing the child's feet in bamboo splints.

The custom is said to have originated during the 唐 (T'ong) dynasty (A. D. 600-900). One of the royal concubines, who was gifted with a lovely face, had ugly, ill-formed feet, and finding that this detracted from her beauty, she bandaged them until they appeared small and shapely. *

禁冷脚: Kam lang keuk.

Prohibit cold feet.

"Prohibit strangers."

Strangers are not permitted to enter a house where a child has been born, till after the customary period, which, in the case of a boy, is nine days, and, in that of a girl, twelve.

* It is affirmed that the practice became general during the 宋 (Sung) dynasty (A. D. 900-1278).

擇日洗頭: Chak yat sai t'au.

Choose day wash head.

"Choose a (lucky) day for washing the head."

The days on which it will be auspicious to perform this act of cleanliness are marked in the calendar. The underlying idea is, that if a day be chosen, then the eyes will be bright and clear, and skin diseases, which affect the head, will not be easily contracted.

上樑架門頭要挂紅布: Sheung leung-ká mún t'au iú kwá hung pò.

Raise tie-beam door head must hang red cloth.

"In fixing tie-beams and door frames, pieces of red cloth must be hung on them."

This may be seen wherever Chinese houses or shops are being erected in this part of the country. The red cloth is sometimes omitted in the case of the door head, but in the case of the tie-beam, never! Its use is that it effectually cuts off and counter-acts the evil influences which are stirred up from the ground in digging the foundations, and in making plaster.

點神主: Tim shan chü.

Dot spiritual lord.

"Dot the ancestral tablet."

After the body of a deceased parent has been duly and ceremoniously interred the mourners return to the house, and set up beside the idol shrine in the home, a paper tablet, termed 靈牌 (Ling p'ái), which to the family represents the family, and now spiritual, lord.

This tablet is allowed to remain, either for seven times seven, or one hundred, days. After the time chosen has elapsed, it is burned, and for it is substituted one made of hard-wood called 神主牌 (Shan chü p'ái.)

On the new tablet the character for lord, 主, is left thus, 王, without the superadded dot, as it is considered lucky to call in a necromancer, or a graduate, who has been fortunate in health, marriage, and, perhaps, in securing office, to insert it. The dot is looked upon as a new graft, which is expected to make the family tree flourish.

When after several generations the tablets begin to accumulate, it is customary to order a large one, on which are engraved the surnames

and names recorded on the small ones, which are then discarded. The smaller tablets stand fourteen inches high, and are about three in breadth.

The surviving members of the family worship these tablets on the first and fifteenth of every month, on festivals, and on the anniversaries of their ancestor's birth and death.

接送値事: Tsip sung chik-sz.

"Welcome escort committee-man."

Every principal street in a city has its own committee, elected annually from among the shop-keepers or householders, and almost every street possesses its temple, or ancestral hall, in which meetings of the committee are held.

The business, which these committees discuss and arrange, includes the engaging of watchmen and police, and the collecting of monies for idol processions, street repairs, and other things of a like public nature. It is within the power of a street committee to order so many strokes with a split bamboo as a punishment for petty larceny.

The ceremonies of welcoming a new, and escorting home an old, street councillor are carried out with a fanfare of trumpets, beating of gongs, and firing of crackers.

老婦跟嫩婦: Lò fú kan nün fú.
Old woman follows young woman.
"The elder woman follows the younger."

This rule, observed in walking through the streets of a city, or along the country roads, seems to be a flat contradiction of the uniform requirement of respect from juniors to seniors, but it was adopted for the sake of protection, to prevent kidnapping--an evil, in face of which, the authorities appear to be powerless.

不戴帽: Pat tái mò. Not wear hat.
"Go bare-headed."

The Chinese, apart from officials, and those who are much exposed to the sun, as farmers, boat-men, and the coolie class, only cover their heads in winter.

送火災分地界: Sung fo tsoi fan ti kái.
Escort fire calamities divide earth boundaries.
"In escorting fire calamities there is a division of districts."

On the first day of a *Tá Tsiú (i. e.* the festival when the streets are adorned with chandeliers, theatres, and images) each householder, or shop-keeper, gives a piece of lucky paper, and

a candle, to be thrown into the river, hoping thereby to escape the danger of a fire breaking out.

Each temple rules one or more streets.

中國口機好秘: Chung kwok hau ki hò pi.

Middle Kingdom mouth machine loves secrecy. *

"A Chinaman loves to keep his own counsel."

So far as business and state secrets are concerned, one readily assents to the statement. As an example of the Government's love of secrecy, and the ability of those who compose it, to keep their own secrets, the Boxer rebellion of 1900 may be instanced. It is now known, that it was no volcanic eruption over which the Empress had absolutely no control, but a deep laid scheme, which had been planned, and circulated in secret, for two years.

But strange to relate, these same people, who love secrecy in speech, hate any suggestion of it in action. Foreign schools, hospitals, churches, and dwelling houses must have open

* It is doubtful whether any country ever equalled China in the matter of secret societies, for this Middle Kingdom swarms with them.

doors, open windows, and open rooms, or villany in some form or other is suspected.

The Westerner's very proper regard for *privacy*, of which they are almost totally devoid, is construed to mean a love of secrecy, which, judging from themselves, they consider never portends good.

買妾: Mái ts'ip. Buy concubine.

"Purchase a concubine."

The length of a Chinaman's purse is the only limit to the number of women he may add to his family, and consequently, it is a rare thing to meet a man in good circumstances, who has not at least two wives. Many keep quite a harem. The reader, however, must not think, that the practice of concubinage is wholly and entirely due to a sensuous desire for a plurality of wives; ancestral worship requires a direct and unbroken succession of sons, and frequently, though not generally, concubines are purchased with this end in view. The price paid varies between one hundred and a thousand dollars, but it may occasionally be less or more than the sums mentioned. It depends upon the

personal attractions and accomplishments of the lady.

No matter how many women there may be in a household, the real wife always holds her place, and is alone honoured with the title "wife."

俾心機就亞妹: Pi sam-ki ch'au á-múi.
Give attention look-after baby.

"Mind and take great care of the baby!"

This injunction, evidently once a command from parents to nurses, has become so general that women who have children, repeat it, as they separate after a friendly visit, as part of a leave-taking formula.

There is no question, that the Chinese love little children, and spoil them as often as parents do in other countries. Indeed, it is not one of the least pleasing features in Chinese life, that fathers may be seen to nurse and amuse their children for a long time together. On the other hand, that infanticide is commonly practised in very poor districts, cannot be denied. One does not need to travel far from Canton to find places, where girls are often drowned the

moment they are born. Still, the primary cause of this evil, is not callous indifference to parental feelings, but poverty of a kind we can hardly appreciate. "Needs must when the devil drives" is the Chinaman's excuse, and due allowance must be made for concomitant evils which suggest such an inhuman necessity.

遊白雲: Yau pák-wạn. Ramble White-cloud. "Ascend the White-cloud Mountain."

Far up this mountain there is a celebrated temple in which is enshrined an idol called 鄭仙 (Ching Sin). The idol represents the spirit of an ancient worthy, who, after eating a nine-jointed grass known as 九節菖蒲 (Kạu Tsit Ch'éung P'ò), was transformed into a fairy. The fairy's birthday falls on the 24th of the 7th moon, and crowds of men from Canton, and some from neighbouring villages, climb the heights which overshadow Canton city from the North, in order to shake the divining sticks before the fairy to discover their prospects for the end of the year and the future. At least one night is spent with the priests in the cool atmosphere beside a limpid stream, and now the

worship of Ching fairy, involving, as it does, a pleasant trip, is generally denoted by the phrase, "ramble over the White-cloud mountain."

求雨: K'au ü, Entreat rain, "Pray for rain."

In seasons of drought, as at present, the 南海 (Nam Hoi), and 番禺 (P'ún Ü) magistrates, whose districts meet in Canton, and whose yamêns are situated within the city walls, ride, attended by their retinue, to the 城隍廟 (Shing Wong Miú: city moat temple) to pray for rain. If their prayers remain unanswered, they proceed to the 龍王廟 (Lung Wong Miú: Dragon Emperor temple) situated at the foot of the 觀音山 (Goddess of Mercy Hill). Should the heavens still appear as brass, then these magistrates present themselves at the 龍王廟 (Dragon Emperor temple), which is in the (白雲山) White cloud mountain. Failing this, the ancient custom of 斷屠: (Discontinue slaughter) pronounced, Tün ts'ò, is enforced by official proclamation. No pigs are allowed to be slaughtered until heaven has granted the refreshing showers. At the time of writing, all these methods have failed, and famine stares us in the face.

打單; Tá tán, Strike bill; "Levy blackmail." This part of China is far-famed for its pirates and robbers, and though we know from observation, that on the main rivers there are guard-boats stationed at intervals of three miles, and though we have six (three English and three French) river gun-boats, which assist the Chinese government in protecting trade, yet there is no reason to disbelieve the statement, that practically every native cargo-boat bringing down fire-wood, brown sugar etc, pays a regular tax to robber bands. Moreover, during the later months of the year, threatening letters are forwarded by robber chiefs to firms in the city, to wealthy gentlemen, and, during the last few years, even to foreign business houses on the Shameen, stipulating, that if a certain sum be not paid over on a date fixed, and at a given place, the offender's premises will be robbed.

豎棋杆及過灘必要放紙錢: Shü k'i-kon k'ap kwo t'án pit iú fong chi ts'in.
Erect flag-staffs and pass rapids certainly must let-go paper money.

"When erecting flag-staffs, or crossing rapids,

one must certainly throw out some paper money."

In China, candidates, who have been successful at the various examinations, beside being allowed to wear distinctive gowns, have the further privilege of erecting, outside the ancestral hall of their village, two flag-staffs from which they fly flags bearing the name of the degree obtained. But the lowest degree necessary for this additional honour is, 貢生 (Kung Shang.) It is given to an unsuccessful B. A. after he has attempted the M. A. examinations in vain for forty years, or longer, without missing a single examination. The flower work and cross-pieces at the top of the poles also denote rank, so that the flag once hoisted is never hauled down again. In due time, it is rotted by the rain, and blown into shreds by the wind.

薑酌: Kéung chéuk. "Ginger feast."

When a child is exactly one month old, relatives and friends are invited by the parents to a feast, a special feature of which is that strips of pickled ginger are always provided. The medicinal properties of ginger are supposed to

benefit the mother, and because ginger is considered the chief dish on that special occasion a friend in congratulating another on the birth of a child, nearly always adds, "You will shortly be inviting me to eat ginger."

收信叫字號: Shau sun kiú tsz-hò.

Receive letter call name-number.

"The receiver of a letter asks (the courier) the address of the sender."

Until the establishment of the "Chinese Imperial Post" within the last five years, the Chinese forwarded correspondence, as best they might, by couriers, by passage boats, or by friends, and as the carrying fee was always paid by the receiver, the amount being written on the envelope by the sender, there was always the opportunity of delivering bogus letters in order to make a little money. This sharp practice has generally been freely indulged in only during the last week or two of each passing year, when families and shop-keepers have been exceptionally busy with their annual cleaning, or in the settlement of the year's accounts. To the credit of this people be it noted, that

they consider it a point of honour to pay up all debts ere New Year's Day dawns.

拜萬壽: Pái mán shau. Congratulate ten-thousand birthday.

"Offer Congratulations to the Emperor on a royal birthday, (or on a festival.)"

There are eight occasions during the Chinese Year, when, at the capital, officials of all ranks, arrayed in court robes specially kept for such functions, present themselves before the august persons in the palace. When, with eyes fixed on the ground, they have assembled within the sacred precincts before the dragon throne, the **吏部尙書**: (Li Pò Shéung Shü, Chief Minister of the Civil Board) leads the company in the observance of this ceremony, which is performed at the same time in every provincial city in temples erected for the purpose. In each provincial **萬壽宮** (Mán Shau Kung, Longevity palace), at the back of a raised platform, is suspended a wooden scroll on which are inscribed the words, **皇帝萬歲萬萬歲** (Wong-tai mán súi, mán mán súi; Emperor ten thousand years ten thousand ten thousand

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years,) and it is in the open court-yard below the steps facing this tablet, that the government servants, from the viceroy down to the deputy, offer their congratulations in the following manner:—A master of ceremonies standing on the steps before the assembly just before dawn, calls aloud, 跪 (Kwai), "Kneel!" and the whole company go gracefully down on their knees. They are no sooner in that position than the order is given 叩首 (K'au Shau) "Knock head!" That command having been complied with three times, the master of ceremonies' voice is again heard bidding them 升 (Shing) "Arise!" The officials, having knelt thrice, and having each time thrice prostrated themselves, arise, and disperse to their yamêns.

The writer has twice witnessed this weird, but gorgeous spectacle in Canton, and the scene will remain as one of the most memorable sights of a life time. The occasions on which one may see the ceremony are as follows:

a.—Chinese New Year's morning.

b.—The Empress's Birth-day, the 9th of the 1st moon.

c.—The Beginning of Spring Festival (the date varies).

d.—The Dragon-boat Festival, the 5th of the 5th moon.

e.—The Emperor's Birthday, the 28th of the 6th moon. He is congratulated, however, on the 26th. *

f.—The Mid-Autumn Festival, the 15th of the 8th moon.

g.—The Empress Dowager's Birthday, the 10th of the 10th moon.

h.—The Winter Festival (the date varies).

迎春: Ying ch'un. "Welcome Spring."

The official ceremony, known by this name, takes place the day previous to the festival termed 立春 (Láp ch'un, Establish Spring) which falls in January or February. The significance of this unique custom is that it constitutes the royal proclamation, that spring has returned, and that agriculture is a very honourable occupation.

* On the Emperor's birthday the officials are not allowed to wear their court robes, and, hence, as they cannot appear in other garments at the function, it is held two days previously.

During the morning of the day mentioned, in every town and city, where there is a deputy or magistrate, the official (the Prefect in a provincial or prefectural city), in behalf of the Emperor, dressed in court robes, and escorted by his retinue, proceeds in a tall, *open* chair, with the greatest possible pomp and display, to the East Gate of the city, outside which he meets a paper boy called, (太歲, T'ái Súi), and a paper buffalo. Having saluted them, he, with a live buffalo standing ready yoked in a field near by, ploughs a furrow and throws in a handful of corn, and then returns to his yamên, and the images are carried back, and left in the courtyard. The next day the official comes out, and beats the images with a whip. This further ceremony is termed: 鞭春: (Pin ch'un, whip Spring) and it means, that the people are to commence ploughing forthwith. The images have no sooner been beaten than the eager spectators at the gate rush in, and scramble for a piece of the paper, or one of the small buffaloes with which the large one is filled, for to obtain either is considered lucky.

棺材庄: Kún-ts'oi chong. Coffin repository. "The house of the dead."

Many foreign residents know this eloquently silent spot in Canton by the designation: "The city of the dead." In the extensive grounds situated outside the North Gate there are over one hundred rooms, or cells, each of which contains one or two coffins placed there by friends of the deceased to await transport to another province, or burial in a local cemetery, which will be chosen for the sake of its good geomantic influences which are believed to directly affect the fortunes of the departed one's descendants. Each depositor pays a deposit fee of from ten to twenty five dollars, and a monthly rent for the room as long as the body may remain there. All large cities have their mortuaries, and in the country the traveller occasionally sees an improvised mortuary in the form of a mat-shed.

講聖論: Kong shing ü, Speak Sacred Edict. "Preach the Sacred Edict."

The Sacred Edict consists of sixteen positive commands expressed in short sentences of seven words each. It was issued by the

Emperor 康熙 (Hong Hi,) who reigned A. D. (1662-1723), as the standard by which the people of the empire ought to regulate their lives.

Now, with a view to imitation as well as opposition, the native Benevolent Societies have opened halls in Canton, Fatshan, and other large cities, similar to those used by missionaries for preaching Christianity to the heathen, in order that the rules of life contained in the Sacred Edict may be continually republished and expounded by means of oral instruction. There are between ten and twenty of these Sacred Edict Halls in Canton city alone. Often within a few doors of each other the representatives of the new and the old teaching may be seen holding the attention of crowded audiences by their fluent utterance, and a liberal use of an unrestricted range of striking illustrations. Women sometimes venture to step inside the door way and listen for a moment, but they never sit down.

II.

EDUCATION.

婦人識字奪夫志: Fú-yan shik tsz tüt fú chi.

Wife knows characters robs husband will.

"An educated wife robs her husband of his will-power."

The belief, expressed in this phrase, accounts in a very large measure for the almost universal practice among the Chinese of ignoring female education.

開學怕見狗: Hoi hok p'a kin kau.

Open study fear see dog.

"A pupil, when he first goes to school, is afraid of seeing a dog"

The dog is esteemed the laziest of animals, and hence the scholar's eyes are bandaged, and he is led to school blindfolded lest he should see one of the canine species, and, as a result, throw away his chances of one day wearing the much-coveted official button.

萬般皆下品: Mán pún kái há pan.
Ten-thousand kinds all low degree.
"All occupations are of low degree."

This hyperbolic statement is used to emphasize the superlative value, and infinite superiority of book-learning. "Knowledge is power" in China, and has commanded respect from the times of Iú and Shun* down to the present. The Literati are the governing class, but they are proud and arrogant to a degree, which cannot be appreciated by the Westerner until he has had intercourse with them, and discovered how that the knowledge of a few characters, and a little history of their own country cause them to look down upon the lower orders with contempt. At the head of the four classes: 士, 農, 工, 商 (literati, farmers, artisans, merchants) the scholars of the Empire sway the ignorant populace at will.

開學博撐葱紅帽頂: Hoi hok pok ch'áng ts'ung hung mò ting.
Open study learning slice-rice-meal onion red hat button.

"When a boy first goes to school a slice of

* Emperors of the Golden Age, B. C. (2356-2205)

fried glutinous rice meal, an onion, and a red hat-button are given him."

These three things are good auguries. The slice of sticky meal is placed by him as he sits at his desk, the hope being that he will stick to his seat. The character for onion having the same sound and tone as that for 'clever,' we at once observe the reason why the parent makes such an extraordinary present to the child, and as various coloured buttons worn on the crown of the hat are the mark of official rank in China, the gift of a button signifies the parent's wish, that the son should attain to the proud distinction of the Mandarinate.

大羅經誤事: Tái lo king ng sz.

Great Lo classic involves trouble.

"The Tái Lo Classic involves one in trouble."

The reason assigned in support of this statement is, that the work pretends to be a fairy classic, whereas fairies have none.

多送明聖經能保國: To sung ming shing king nang pò kwok.

Much present intelligent holy classic able protect country.

"The country may be preserved by distributing widely the Intelligent Holy Classic."

The work to which such remarkable latent influence and power are ascribed is the Kwán Tái classic. It contains precepts, and exhortations, which form a *précis* of the ethical teaching of * Confucius, Mencius, and other sages. It is widely read, and selections are repeated before the shrines of Kwán Tái.

書在肚: Shü tsoi t'ò. Books in stomach.
"A literary man."

大肚男: Tái-t'ò nám. "A corpulent male."
Both sayings are used of learned men.

The erroneous conception as to the seat of learning is one of those strange anomalies, which do not fail to amuse the student of the Chinese language, and which serve to illustrate how widely divergent from our own is the view-point from which the Asiatic mind observes most things.

人能在心: Yan nang tsoi sam.
Man able dwell mind.
"Man possesses the power of concentration."

* Confucius lived B. C. (552-479), and Mencius B. C. (371-288). Vide Legge's edition of the Chinese Classics.

手瓜起展：Shau-kwá hi chin. Fore-arm swell open.

"Extremely clever."

不入虎穴焉得虎子：Pat yap fú üt in tak fú tsz. Not enter tiger den how get tiger son.

"If you do not enter the tiger's den how can you get the tiger's cub?"

No prize, that is worth having, is attained without taking risks, and overcoming adverse circumstances.

窮醋大：K'ung ts'ò tái. Poor vinegar great.

"An impecunious and useless book-worm."

鐵硯磨穿：T'it in mo ch'ün. Iron ink-slab rub through.

"He has completely worn out an iron ink-slab."

The Chinese do not use liquid ink, but pour a little water on to a marble slab, and then rub down a piece of Indian ink, and dip their brush into the mixture. The saying is equivalent to the English; "he is a very Trojan for work."

開卷有益：Hoi kün yau yik. Open roll there-is benefit.

"No volume is ever opened in vain."

做到老學到老: Tsò tò lò hok tò lò. Do till old learn till old.

"As long as you live, work, and while you work, study"; or, "Till age, let work and study go hand in hand."

Here we have an injunction worthy of the best minds of the empire, and one which is of universal application.

腹便便但欲眠: Fuk p'in-p'in tán yuk min. Stomach full (of books and wisdom) but wishes sleep. "Very learned, but sleepy."

This has reference to a scholar of the Hon dynasty, Pin Hau Sin, who, though very clever, was always sleepy, and the phrase is employed sarcastically today against scholars, who take an afternoon siesta.

識時務者爲俊傑: Shik shi mò ché wai tsun-kit. Know times affairs that-one is pre-eminent distinguished.

"He that is acquainted with affairs is one of a thousand."

China stands in need of such men today to save her from ruin.

手拈一管筆: Shau nim yat kún pat. Hand carry one piece pen. "Educated."

The meaning is, that the person spoken of has, in his education and ability, a means of livelihood, and need not depend on others.

六十六學不足: Luk shap luk hok pat tsuk. Six ten six learn not enough.

"At sixty-six one has not learned enough."

Knowledge, even when restricted to the literature of a country which has defied the progress of the centuries, is inexhaustible.

目不識丁: Muk pat shik ting. Eye not know ting (the two-stroked character ting 丁) "He does not know B. from a bull's foot."

笑各縣聲音並呆: Siú kok ün shing yam ping ngoi.

Laugh each district sound tone together foolish.

"One laughs at the pronunciation of each district, as being equally absurd."

There are foreigners who argue, that the Cantonese do not appreciate slight dialectic distinctions; but the sarcasm embodied in the phrase we have translated above, points to the fact, that the educated classes are conscious of the changes wrought in the spoken language by a river, a valley, or a range of mountains.

There is no attempt at explanation. No

inquiry is made into the cause or causes. Dialects exist, and are recognised as a source of amusement and ridicule.

The reader will understand, that it is not the broad distinctions between Mandarin, Hakka, Fukienese, and Cantonese, which are here referred to, but the differences * in the use of the last of these dialects. These differences are so marked and so regular, that the student of Chinese learns by degrees, that by some natural process the language of China has been divided into dialects, and that, perhaps, by an extension of the same process these dialects have broken up again into sub-dialects.

Thus we have Northern and Southern Mandarin, West-End and provincial Cantonese, and, so far as the Canton province is concerned, there is an East River, and a North River Hakka. The subject opened up by the phrase quoted is most fascinating, and although it has received some attention from various sinologues, it has not yet been dealt with in that scientific and exhaustive manner it deserves.

* The substitution of *l* for *n* in words like 男 (nám), 女 (nü), and of *w* for *f* in words like 花 (fá), and of *h* for *th* in the San Ui patois, and also many variations in tones and in finals, will recur to the mind of every student of Cantonese.

III.

ETHICS.

地獄無門人自鑿天堂有路不知行： Ti yuk mó mún yan tsz tsok t'in t'ong yau lò pat chi háng. Earth-prison no door man himself chisel-out heaven-hall has road not know walk.

"There is no door leading to hell, but man himself makes one, there is a road to heaven, but man does not know how to walk in it."

天網恢恢疏而不漏： T'in mong fúi-fúi sho i pat lau. Heaven net vast large-meshes but not let-through.

"Heaven's net is vast, and the meshes thereof are large, but no man slips through."

有心爲善雖善不賞無心爲惡雖惡不罰： Yau sam wai shin súi shin pat shéung mó sam wai ok súi ok pat fat. Have heart do right altho' right not reward, no heart do wrong altho' wrong not punish.

"Intentional right doing, and unintentional wrong doing are not recompensed."

善爲福母禍爲惡子: Shin wai fuk mò wo wai ok tsz. Goodness is happiness mother calamity is evil son.

"Goodness is the mother of happiness and calamity is the son of evil."

善惡無門惟人自召: Shin ok mò mún wai yan tsz chiú. Goodness evil no door only man himself calls.

"No man is forced by heaven to do good or evil, he himself chooses."

善惡之報如影隨形: Shin ok chi pò ü ying ts'ui ying. Goodness evil their recompense like shadow following substance.

"Reward and punishment follow goodness and evil as certainly as shadow follows substance."

作善餘慶作惡餘殃: Tsok shin ü hing tsok ok ü yéung. Do good abounding happiness do evil abounding calamities.

"Do that which is right, and you will enjoy a superfluity of happiness, do that which is evil and your cup of misery will overflow."

善不積不足以成名惡不積不足以滅身; Shin pat tsik pat tsuk i shing ming, ok pat tsik pat tsuk i mit shan.

Goodness not accumulate not enough wherewith make name, evil not accumulate not enough wherewith destroy body.

"If good deeds accumulate then a name will be made, but if evil increase then the body will be destroyed."

善登天堂惡陷地獄: Shin tang t'in t'ong ok hám ti yuk. Good ascend heaven wicked descend hell.

"The good go to heaven, but the wicked descend into hades."

冥曹有賞善罰惡之司: Ming ts'ó yau shéung shin fat ok chi sz. Hades officials have recompense good punish evil their officers.

"Among the officers in Hades, there is one that recompenses the good, and another that punishes the evil."

天道福善禍淫: T'in tò fuk shin wo yam. Heaven path (or, doctrine) happiness good calamity licentious.

"Heaven's method is to make the good happy, and the profligate wretched"

善門難開: Shin mún nán hoi. Goodness door difficult open.

"It is difficult to commence philanthropical work."

The reason assigned is one that presses itself with terrible weight upon all, who wish to alleviate the sufferings of humanity, viz:—that there is no limit to the needs of the poor and distressed, and consequently one does not know where to begin.

從善如登從惡如崩: Ts'ung shin ü tang ts'ung ok ü pang. Follow good like ascending follow evil like falling,

"The pursuit of goodness is like ascending, the pursuit of evil like falling down."

如臨深淵如履薄冰: Ü lam sham ün ü li pok ping. Like near deep abyss like tread thin ice.

"Like treading upon thin ice, and standing on the edge of a precipice."

Life is full of dangers. The path of rectitude skirts the precipice, and crosses deep waters, and, therefore, the utmost caution is needed to avoid a fall.

行年六十方知五十九之非: Hang nin luk shap fong chi ng shap kau chi fé. Walk years six ten then know five ten nine their faults.

"At sixty a man realises the faults of fifty nine."

IV.

EXAMINATIONS.

天開榜: T'in hoi pong. Heaven opens list. "Heaven makes out the list of successful candidates at the examination."

With the Chinese, everything is a question of *Heaven's decree.* For him, who has obtained the decree, heirs, honour, wealth, and longevity are reserved. Others are fated to seek in vain.

The almost total indifference of the Chinese to their physical and moral surroundings is due to their fatalistic creed. The responsibility for all life's ills rests with heaven. Periods of prosperity and fortune are predetermined not only for individuals, but also for nations. Why then, the Chinese argue, should they worry and bestir themselves about insanitary conditions, the dense ignorance, and prevailing poverty of the

masses, the peculations of officials, and the state of ruin into which the country has fallen, when every effort to change the decree would be futile.

無陳不開榜無李不成科: Mò Ch'an pat hoi pong mò Li pat shing fo. No Ch'an not open B.A.—list no Li not complete M.A.—examination.

"Without the surname Ch'an a list of successful B.A. candidates could not be made out, and without the surname Li an M.A. examination could not be held."

The surnames Ch'an and Li are akin to the English surnames, "Smith" and "Brown."

竹樹開花中狀元: Chuk shü hoi fá chung chong-ün. Bamboo tree open flower pass first-Hanlin.

"When the bamboos flower, a native of the province will head the list of Hanlin graduates." With this event, which occurs, as a rule, once in half a century, the Chinese connect famine, pestilence, and war, thus showing that the superstitious readily believe the same occurrence to be both auspicious and inauspicious.

The bamboos flowered throughout this province in the spring of 1899, and in the autumn

110
360

Kwong Sü was dethroned, and 1900 proved to be the Boxer Year.

狀元怕問字: Chong-ün p'á man tsz. First-Hanlin fears ask characters.

"The first of the Hanlin graduates fears to be questioned on characters."

Though a scholar of eminent degree, a Hanlin is conscious of the disparity between his actual knowledge of characters, and the number of hieroglyphs in the dictionaries. The Hanlin's bashfulness is perfectly natural, for while there are only from four to eight thousand characters in common use, an average double page of the Kang Hi Dictionary (**康熙字典**) contains one hundred and ten, and there are three hundred and fifty nine pages in the book. *

中狀元要地厚: Chung chong-ün iú ti hau. Pass first-Hanlin need ground thick.

"To come out first of the Hanlin graduates the earth of your village must be deep."

Shantung is famous for the depth of its wells, and the number of its Senior Wranglers.

* The commonly accepted estimate, that there are forty thousand words in the language, must be very nearly correct.

朱衣點頭: Chü i tim t'au. Red clothes dot head. "The spirit dressed in red nods his head."

As the examiner-in-chief (**主考**, Chü Háu) goes through the papers at his desk, the spirit described is supposed to stand behind him, and, when he picks up an essay that ought to pass, the spirit nods assent.

入闈拜紅黑旗: Yap wai pái hung hák k'i. Enter examination gate worship red black flag.

"The examiners, having entered through the gate of the examination grounds, worship a red and a black flag."

They do this by order of the Emperor. In worshipping the red flag the spirits of those, who have been helped or benefited by the candidates, are entreated to come and assist their benefactors in the examination. The prayer offered before the black flag is that the spirits of those, who in this life were injured or murdered by intended candidates, may come into the cells, and avenge the past upon their former enemies.*

* Vide page 49.

睡沙翁: Shúi shá yung. Sleep sand man. "A corpse placed on the sand."

The law of China is such, that should an examiner or candidate die within the examination enclosure during the examination the body is placed on the ground, and afterwards thrown over the wall, for the entrance is a royal gate, and no corpse must be carried through.

With respect to a yamên, the rule is not quite so stringent. In case of death, the Mandarin, his wife, or his mother may be borne out through the gates, but the bodies of soldiers, clerks, or deputies must be put through a hole made in the encircling wall.

五色筆: Ng shik pat. Five colour brush. "Five (different) coloured pencils."

In the process of examining the papers five colours are used, and every candidate, whose essay is marked with all five, passes.

九月童生變狀元: Kau üt t'ung-shang pin chong-ün. Nine month candidate become first-Hanlin.*

"There is no such regulation in China as the keeping of a certain number of terms, or the

* "A man may take all the degrees from B. A. to first Hanlin in 9 months."

enforced waiting of two years, prior to taking an intermediate, or a final examination. Hence, it has been known, when the examinations have run on consecutively, as they happen to do occasionally, that a young man has gone right through from B. A. to first-Hanlin in the course of nine months.

姓氏發科: Sing shi fát fo. Surnames surnames come-out M. A.

"Some surnames graduate M. A."

That is to say, certain surnames are lucky.

新會人要新科舉子乃能中進士: San-úi yan iù san fo kü-tsz nái nang chung tsun-sz.

San-ùi man must new M. A.-examination elected then able get LL. D.

"San-Ui (one of the Sz Yap districts of this province) candidates must be M. A. graduates of the most recent M. A. examination in order to graduate doctors" (LL. D.)

貢院自打死: Kung ün tsz tá sz.

Examination hall self beat death.

"Suicide in the examination building."

No examination is conducted, I find, without

one or more suicides occurring in the cells in which the candidates are cooped up for three days and nights. The explanation suggested, is that these men, who destroy themselves, have, at some period of their lives, been implicated-either directly or indirectly-in murder, and that the ghost of the departed takes advantage of the murderer's enforced loneliness to avenge itself in the manner described. Within the Canton examination enclosure there are 13,000 cells.

全榜林: Ts'ün pong Lam. Whole list Lam.

"The whole list of successful examination candidates contained only the surname Lam."

The story recounted in connection with this traditional saying is as follows :—Years ago in the Fuk-kien province the examiner determined for some reason or other, that no person surnamed Lam should be passed, and therefore he carefully placed all the essays written by men of this surname in a jar before marking the other papers, but a fire suddenly broke out in the building, and the examiner careful only to make good his escape, left everything to be demolished by the flames. When the

fire was over, the débris was searched for material upon which to write a report, and only the jar with the rejected essays remained intact.

盲妹赶考: Máng múi kon háu. Blind girl hurry take-examination.*

"In Canton city there are several thousand blind girls, and the life of degradation, to which they are doomed by the corrupt state of society, excites pity in all hearts capable of the finer feelings of our race. These girls are hawked round the streets at night, and hired out to sing licentious songs, and when there is an influx of thousands of examination candidates into Canton, then also these poor bats and owls are brought in scores to this city, which is, perhaps, the wickedest in China.

槐花黃舉子忙: Wái fá wong kü-tsz mong. Cassia-Japonica flower yellow candidate fluster.

"When the Cassia Japonica blooms the M. A. candidates become excited."

The examination is held synchronously with the blossoming of these flowers.

* "The blind girls are hurrying to take their examination."

彌封謄錄: Ni-fung t'ang-luk. Seal transcribe.

"Seal up the name of the essayist, and write out a copy of the essay."

That part of the regulations affecting Chinese examinations, which, quite apart from the standard of excellence attained by the candidates, allows only about one per cent to pass, strikes every foreigner as being grossly unfair. And when the men, who get into the hundred from which the thirty or eighty are chosen, find themselves rejected, they smart under this injustice. Whether, as is possible, there is a political reason for the restriction, the writer does not know, but the principle on which the papers are marked is almost as just as one could wish, for as each essay is copied, and as the name of the essayist does not appear, the examiner cannot, except by collusion with the copyists, show partiality. Still, the system of bribery being coextensive with the government service, the commonly received opinion, that degrees are occasionally sold, cannot be without some foundation in fact.

V.

FEASTS.

賜宴: Ts'z in. Bestow feast. "Give a feast."

The Emperor occasionally invites an official of high rank to partake of a meal with him, and the gracious act is known by the above designation. The honour, however, is dearly paid for by the time the feast is over, for the guest kneels throughout, and for every mouthful of food taken he is obliged to knock his head on the floor as a sign of gratitude to his sovereign.

猜枚: Ch'ái múi. Guess stem.

"Guess the number of fingers."

At a feast two guests sitting opposite each other will suddenly commence to throw out their right hands towards each other, and, as they do so, both shout out a number, which is a guess at the number of fingers held up, and each time the winner fines the loser by making him drink a cup of wine. So the game often proceeds till the small hours of the morning, or till the fingers cannot be distinguished from stems. By habitual drinkers the

game can be kept up for a very long time without any sign of intoxication appearing, for the ordinary Chinese wine-cup holds but a thimbleful.

翅席: Ch'i tsik. Fins mat. *

"Shark fins' feast."

At this feast there are always eight large and eight small dishes, sixteen plates, and two course of sweet cakes.

紅白席: Hung pák tsik. "Red (and) white feast." This is the general designation for a first class feast, at which bird's nest always forms the first course, and shark's fins the second.

飲花酒: Yam fá tsau. Drink flower wine.

"Partake of a feast with prostitutes."

座上客常滿罇中酒不空; Tso shéung hák shéung mún tsun chung tsau pat hung.

Seat upon guest always full bottle middle wine not empty.

"May the guest room always be full, and the wine in the cellar never run short."

* The ancients sat on mats spread on the floor. Today the Chinese take their meals seated round a table as we do.

中桌: Chung ch'euk. Middle table.

"A servants' feast."

When officials dine together, their followers always have a separate feast provided either in the yamên or at a restaurant.

喜事草茶: Hi sz ts'ò ch'á. Glad affairs coarse tea. "At merry-makings the tea is poor."

Moral: If you wish to drink good tea, visit your friend on an ordinary occasion.

飲酒要倒些落地免醉: Yam tsau iú tò sé lok ti min tsui. Drink wine must pour little down ground prevent drunk.

"When wine is drunk a little should be poured out on the ground to prevent intoxication."

If the fullest extent of propriety be observed by a host at a feast, then he will not only bow each guest separately according to the order of precedence to his seat, but after conducting the guest to his place will take first the chopsticks, then the wine-cup, and then the spoon, and with each make a low obeisance.

VI.

FESTIVALS.

盂蘭會: Ü lán úi: Dish fragrant-plant association.

The above is an alternative for **鬼節** (kwai tsit), which means "Ghosts' festival."

The festival is of Buddhist origin, and is always celebrated during the seventh moon of the Chinese year by the entire population of China without distinction of birth or state. It is believed, that the gates of hades are thrown open, and that the shades, who dwell by the river styx swarm up through the portals, hungry, destitute, and naked, but vested with terrible powers, to seek money, food, and clothing on the earth.

On a certain day, and each family chooses its own day, food, in the form of vegetables, rice, and fruit, and cash are thrown into the street for the ghosts to consume and use, and paper clothes are burned for them to wear, and so great is the fear of injury to person and family, that even the poorest spend the little they can so ill afford on paper

money. Some go to the graves to perform the ceremony. Of the things dropped into the streets, the fruit and copper cash are picked up by beggars.

乞巧節: Hat háu tsit. Beg smartness festival.

"The beg-for-skill festival."

Only unmarried girls keep this festival, which is held on the first of the seventh moon.

The seven stars, or seven sisters, which are the Pleiades, are worshipped, and entreated by the maidens to bestow skill, and each year tables are laden with skilful productions in needle work, in paper, wool &c, all the hand work of young girls, to show that the previous year's prayers have been answered, and to what extent in each case.

燈節: Tang tsit. "Lantern festival."

On the fifteenth of the first moon the people purchase lanterns to hang up in the shop or home. In both cases it is suspended before the idol shrine, but in the former it is with a view to entreat riches, and in the latter to pray for children.

Though some keep the lantern a whole year before destroying it, as a rule it is burned on the second of the second moon.

插菖蒲: Ch'áp ch'éung-p'ò. Fix-in flag bulrush.

"Hang the Acorus Calamus upon the door."

At the Dragon Festival, always celebrated on the 5th of the 5th moon, this sweet flag is fastened to the foot-door (Keukmún). The Acorus Calamus has flattened edges, and the Chinese imagination saw in it a two-edged sword provided by heaven to defend the house against evil spirits. It is further believed, that it has power to attract riches and honour.

The "Dragon-Boat Festival" had its origin in the search by boat for the body of Wat Ün, who committed suicide by drowning. He was a great minister (Tái fú) in Ch'o, which country covered the whole of Hupeh, Hunan and Kiang-si, before the age of Confucius; * but the grief that a currupt court and a misgoverned country inspired in his heart impelled him to destroy

* Confucius was born B. C. 552.

himself. The famous book of poems entitled "Li Sò King" was from his pen. The hand of time changes nearly everything it touches, and in this festival we have a striking instance. What was first a reverential and sorrowful search, and then in all probability an act of mourning, became a regatta at which crews from different places compete in races which spectators watch from boats and the banks as at Henley, as the writer has witnessed at Nam Kong.

In many places, however, the boats, in which there are often from 80 to 90 men, who, save the four who stand to beat drums and gongs, sit two abreast, are simply paddled up and down the river to make a noise and a show.

拾炮能發丁財貴壽: Sháp p'áu nang fát ting ts'oi kwai shau. Pick-up cannon produce sons, wealth, honour, longevity.

"He who picks up the cannon will have heirs, wealth, honour, and will enjoy longevity."

On the 2nd day of the 2nd moon a ring is shot from a bamboo cannon into the air, and whoever makes himself the happy possessor of the ring upon its falling to the ground is supposed thereafter to be smiled upon by fortune.

午時書能退水火盜賊官非虫蟻:
Ng shi shü nang t'úi shui fo tò-ts'ák kún-fé ch'ung ngai. Noon time book able push-back water fire robber lawsuit insects ants.

"The writing of the 5th day of the 5th moon wards off floods, fires, robbers, lawsuits and insects."

The charms referred to are those connected with the Dragon Boat Festival.

打火星醮預便水車救火並搬遷貨物:
Tá fo sing tsiú ü pin shui ch'e kau fo ping pún ts'in fo mat. Strike fire star Tsiú prepare ready water engine save fire also move cargo things.

"Before Mars' festival, prepare the fire-engine to extinguish fires, and be ready also to move your goods and chattels."

Experience is a fruitful source of colloquial sayings which contain wholesome advice. At the autumn festival when the 'fire star' (Mars) is worshipped, chandeliers and boxes of images are suspended over the streets, while here and there in these crowded thoroughfares theatres are erected for all night performances. As these structures consist entirely of painted boards and

bamboo ties, it will be readily imagined, that during this festival, there occur conflagrations which are directly due to the *modus operandi* of the worship which is offered in order that during the dry season there may not be any fires.

鏡屏炮: King p'ing p'áu. Mirror screen cannon. "The mirror-screen cannon."

On the occasion of the Earth God's birthday a bamboo cannon is fired, and whoever picks up the first ball obtains the first prize, which may be a screen; but the winner is obliged to supply a prize of equal value for the successful competitor the following year.

洗頭過節: Sai t'au kwo tsit. Wash head pass festival.

"Wash your head before a festival."

The reason is that on each festival the idols are worshipped, and cleanliness is a sign of reverence.

過年: Kwo nin. Pass-across year.

"Keep New Year."

The New Year's holiday is the most festive season of the whole year. For several days all

shops are shut while some remain closed for a fortnight. Houses and shop-fronts are decorated with new paper charms, the idols are worshipped, friends are visited, and on every hand one hears the salutation: 恭喜發財: Kung hi (fát ts'oi,) "Respectful congratulations. may-you-get rich!"

清明: Ts'ing Ming. "Pure Brightness."

Ts'ing Ming is the Spring Festival when the people flock to the hills and mountains to repair the tombs and to present offerings of meat and wine to the spirits of their ancestors.

The origin of this universal practice is unknown, but the records of its existence go back more than two thousand five hundred years.

立春: Láp ch'un. "Establish Spring."

See pages 28, 29.

過冬: Kwo Tung. Pass Winter. "Winter Festival."

This festival, which falls on the day following the shortest day of the year, is kept as a general holiday.

重陽節: Ch'ung yéung ts'it. "Ch'ung Yeung Festival."

The origin of this festival is accounted for by the following story. An ancient worthy was visited by a fairy who revealed to him that calamity would descend upon his home on the 9th of the 9th moon and that he ought to go away on that day. The man believed the warning and spent the day mentioned on the top of a mountain, and when he returned to his house, he found that it had been destroyed by fire. To-day many celebrate the festival by going out to the hills and mountains to worship at the graves of their ancestors.

浴佛節: Yuk fat tsit.

"Bathe Buddha Festival."

On this festival, which falls on the 8th of the 4th moon, the people eat *Imsai* biscuits which are made of grass and flour.

除夕: Ch'ü tsik. Remove evening.

"New Year's eve."

The people always worship the idols in their homes on New year's eve, and the practice of bowing on that occasion to each other and to friends who live near is termed (**辭歲**: T'sz sui.)

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"Taking-leave-of (the old) year."

For the information of students a list of the Chinese Festivals is appended. It will be noticed that there are two in each month of the year :—

正月立春雨水	二月驚蟄春分
三月清明穀雨	四月立夏小滿
五月芒種夏至	六月小暑大暑
七月立秋處暑	八月白露秋分
九月寒露霜降	十月立冬小雪
十一月大雪冬至	十二月小寒大寒

VII.

FOODS.

生在蘇州食在廣州着在杭州死在汀州: Shang tsoi Sò-Chau shik tsoi Kwong-Chau chéuk tsoi Hong-Chau sz tsoi Ting-Chau.

Born in Soochau eat in Canton dress in Hang-chau die in Tingchau.

"One ought to be born in Soochau, eat in Canton, dress in Hangchau, and die in Tingchau."

Soochau supplies the healthiest physical environment, Canton the greatest variety of food, Hangchau the finest silks, and Tingchau the best coffin-wood.

民以食爲天: Man i shik wai t'in. People take eat to-be heaven.

"As regards the people, food must be considered the most important thing."

蠶食中國: Ts'ám shik chung kwok. Silkworms eat Middle Kingdom.

"Nibbling at China."

By this phrase the action of the Foreign Powers in seizing ports is most aptly compared with the silkworm's gradual nibbling at the mulberry leaf until the whole is consumed.

蠔豉係齋: Hò shi hai chái. Oysters pickled are vegetable-diet.

"Dried (salted) oysters are vegetarian diet."

食新出瓜菜長壽: Shik san ch'ut kwá ts'oi ch'éung shau. Eat new produced cucurbitaceous vegetable long life.

"If one eats cucurbitaceous vegetables when they first come in season, then one will enjoy long life."

鵪鶉鷓鴣頭甚補: Om-ch'un ché-kú t'au sham pò. Quails partridges heads very nourishing.

"The heads of the quail and the partridge are very nourishing."

打邊爐落薑口不爆拆: Ta pin lò lok kéung hau pat pò ch'ák. Strike edge stove put in ginger mouth not blister crack.

"In whipping the stove, if a little ginger is put into the water, then the mouth will not blister or the lips crack."

The Chinese custom of "whipping the stove," is very interesting. During the cold weather the people of fairly well-to-do families often place

a charcoal stove (fung lò) on the table at meal times. On the stove rests a vessel of boiling water into which, as the meal proceeds, pieces of raw meat and uncooked fish are dipped by the company. The slices are very thin, and hence they are partially cooked by being thus immersed.

飲河水好味: Yam ho shui hò mi.
Drink river water good taste.
"River water has a good flavour."

In Chinese cities well water is nearly always more or less brackish owing to the insanitary conditions which obtain throughout the country.

羊頭補: Yéung t'áu pò. Sheep head nourishing. "Sheep's head is nourishing."

果皮穩: Kwo p'i wan. Fruit skin safe.
"Fruit rind is harmless."

Orange peel is used in Chinese cuisine in the preparation of a number of dishes, and the thick rind of the pumelo is boiled with sugar and made into sweets.

食羅白發夢: Shik lo-pák fát mung.
Eat turnips produce dreams.
"If you eat turnips you dream."

As the Cantonese like their vegetables crisp,

i.e. partially cooked, the dreaming is probably due directly to indigestion, and indirectly to the turnips which, being eaten while hard, cause the indigestion.

新出瓜菜唔怕貴: San ch'ut kwá ts'oi m p'á kwai. New produced cucurbitaceous vegetable not fear dear.

"Do not mind the dear price of cucurbitaceous vegetables, when they first come in season." *

食番菜: Shik fán ts'oi. Eat barbarian vegetables. "Eat foreign food."

鷄仔蛋有補: Kai tsai tán yau pò. Chicken little eggs have nourishing.

"Addled eggs are nourishing."

小浮萍食大肚: Siu fau p'ing shik tái t'ò. Little floating weeds eat big stomach.

"To eat the vegetation which grows on the surface of stagnant water causes obesity."

五更飯補身: Ng káng fán pò shan. Fifth watch rice nourishes body.

"Rice eaten during the 5th watch (3-5 a.m.) is very nourishing."

* Vide the second phrase on page 66.

虱𡁠止饑: Shat-ná chi ki. "Lice stop (the pangs of) hunger."

This is said of beggars, who sit by the road side and hunt their filthy rags for vermin.

酒係米做故飽人: Tsau hai mai tsò kú páu yan. Wine is rice made therefore fills men.

"Wine is made from rice and therefore satisfies hunger."

女人狗肉: Nü yan kau yuk. Female person dog flesh. "Women's dog-flesh."

Guavas are thus vulgarly described since women are as fond of them as men are of dog's-flesh.

爲食鬼: Wai shik kwai. For eat devil. "A glutton."

大食會: Tái shik úi. Great eat association. "A dinner association."

This name is applied to a coterie of familiar friends who informally band themselves together and agree to give dinners in turn.

上茶居: Shéung ch'á-kü. Go-up tea-house. "Go to a restaurant."

It is customary for mechanics and labourers to leave their work twice during the day to seek refreshment at the tea-shops.

Such breaks are a necessity, for at many shops the workmen work for their employers from daylight till nine o'clock at night.

食指動: Shik chi tung. Eat finger moves. "First-finger twitches."

Tradition affirms that an ancient personage, whose forefinger sometimes moved involuntarily, discovered that as sure as his finger twitched he would be invited to a feast, and hence today a person instead of remarking that he has been asked out to dinner will simply say that his forefinger twitches.

硬邊魚爽: Ngáng pin ü shong. Hard side fish crisp.

"The hard side of a fish is crisp."

Fish-mongers, in slicing a fish, cut out one side leaving the head and tail on the other, which is called the hard side. Why one side of

the same fish should be considered more toothsome than the other, it is difficult to imagine, and there appears to be no explanation of the strange notion.

甕菜餸酒曉脚反筋: Ung ts'oi sung tsau hiu keuk fán kan. Ung vegetable eaten-with wine understands feet reverse muscles.

"The Ung vegetable if eaten with wine produces cramp."

魚粥壞胃: Ü chuk wái wai. Fish broth spoils appetite. "Fish *chuk* spoils the appetite."

Chuk is a thick broth made by boiling rice in plenty of water until the grains break up into shreds. At some country inns the traveller finds it supplied for lunch, and where the people have not been educated by foreign doctors to the use of condensed or fresh milk it is the ordinary diet given to the sick.

VIII.

FOREIGNERS.

西人無禮: Sai yan mò lai. Western men no propriety.

"Westerners have no rules of propriety."

From the Chinese stand-point we behave with the gravest impropriety when we shake hands with ladies or walk arm-in-arm with them; but the spiral vibration on meeting, instead of the inimitable bow, and if worn, the non-removal of spectacles, these things–not to mention the wearing of short coats–are highly offensive and betray our want of (oriental) manners and refinement.

西人忠信: Sai yan chung sun. Western men loyal trustworthy.

"Westerners are loyal and trustworthy."

This golden opinion has been won after many decades of political, commercial, and religious intercourse.

番鬼佬鬼計多端: Fán kwai lò kwai kai to tün. Foreign devil fellow devil tricks many kinds.

"The foreign devil has no end of devilish tricks."

In this sneer we have the occasional reply of a Chinaman to one of his countrymen as he dilates on the great ability and wonderful resources of the foreigner in building steam-ships and railways, and in lighting the streets by means of electricity.

老廣東: Lô Kwong tung. Old Kwangtung. "An old Kwangtungite."

This appellation is given to foreigners who have resided a good many years in this province, and who have become acquainted with the language, ways, and customs of the people, and who therefore could not be easily deceived.

番鬼佬睇穿石: Fán kwai lò t'ai ch'ün shek. "Foreign devil fellow sees through rock."

Every time a foreigner climbs a hill or mountain this remark is made by simple superstitious folk, who verily believe that the foreign devil's eyes can discover gold or silver through several *strata* of rock.

中外一家: Chung ngoi yat ká. Middle outside one family.

"The people of the Middle Kingdom and those outside it constitute one family."

There is a class of Chinese, who believe in the unity of the human race.

非我族類: Fé ngo tsuk lúi. Not my clan race.

"They do not belong to my clan or race."

We could not wish for a truer picture of the attitude that the Chinese people as a whole have assumed towards foreigners than that portrayed in these words.

楚材晉用: Ch'o t'soi Tsun yung. Ch'o ability Tsun uses.

"China uses foreigner's brains."

The subtle irony underlying these words leaves the Oriental in the proud position of scornful ascendency.

借助他山: Tse cho t'á shán. Borrow help another mountain.

"Borrow another country's assistance."

This, China has been forced to do as regards her army, navy, and Maritime Customs.

眉心十字架: Mi sam shap-tsz-ká. Eyebrows heart cross.

"He has a cross on his forehead."

The sign of the cross made when a priest baptizes a convert is supposed to sink into the forehead and become indelible.

無辮佬: Mò pin lò. No queue fellow.

"A foreigner."

紅毛: Hung mò. Red hair. "An Englishman."

Englishmen are thus described irrespective of the colour of their hair.

重譯來朝: Ch'ung yik loi ch'iú. Repeated translate come court.

"Their despatches are translated again and again ere they come to court."

For example, English, German, and Russian documents have been translated into French, and from French into Chinese, and then presented.

指南返國: Chi nám fán kwok. Point South return country.

"They returned to their country by means of the pointing-South-chariot."

It is believed that this historic vehicle was

specially invented to allow of the return of foreigners to their own country.

昭君出塞 Ch'iu-Kwan ch'ut ts'oi. "Ch'iu Kwan went-out-through the barrier." Ch'iu Kwan was the name of a royal concubine who was given in marriage to a King of Hung-nò by an Emperor of the Hon Dynasty, and now whenever a Chinese woman marries a foreigner this phrase is used in a metaphorical sense.

漢奸: Hon Kán. Hon traitors. "Chinese traitors."

All those who serve foreigners, and those who become Christians, are thus spoken of by those who hate the barbarians, but originally the epithet was applied only to those who betrayed their country by assisting foreign armies.

孔聖之教將傳流于外國: Hung shing chi káu tséung ch'ün lau ü ngoi kwok. Confucius sage his religion will transmit flow in outside countries.

"Confucianism will be propagated in foreign countries."

The presumption is based not only upon the number of foreigners, who have come from the West to reside in the Middle Kingdom, and

the number of Chinese, who emigrate to the Strait Settlements, America, and Australia, but also upon the famous dictum of Confucius :—

吾聞用夏變夷者未聞變于夷者也: Ng man yung Ha pin I ché mi man pin ü I ché yá. I heard use Ha transform I those not yet heard transformed by I those.

"I have heard of Chinese reforming barbarians, but not of their being reformed by barbarians."

額頭鑿得字: Ngák-t'au tsok tak tsz. Fore-head engrave get characters.

"You have characters engraved upon your forehead."

The heathen sometimes thus addresses his friend, who informs him that he has become a Christian, and in doing so shows his appreciation of the fact that the inward change manifests itself in the face.

番鬼佬: Fán kwai lò. "Foreign devil fellow;" **番人** Fán yan: "Barbarian man;" **老番** Lò fán: "Venerable barbarian," and **西人:** "Western man," are the general appellations by which foreigners are known.

IX.

FRIENDSHIP.

得一知己可無憾: Tak yat chi-ki ho mò hòm. Obtain one know-self may no regret.

"If a man secure an intimate friend he may easily be without regrets."

能爲知己道難與俗人言: Nang wai chi-ki tò nán ü tsuk yan in. Able with know-self speak difficult with common men talk.

"I can converse with my intimate friends, but not with common men."

There is no pleasure in speaking with men who cannot enter into one's ideas and ambitions.

互相資益: U-séung tsz yik. Reciprocally give benefit. "Friends should help each other."

有過相規有急相濟: Yau kwo seung kw'ai yau kap séung tsai. Have fault mutually admonish have extremity mutually relieve.

"Friends should admonish one another as to faults, and help each other in case of extremity."

忘年交: Mong nin káu. Forget years friendship. "A friendship that disregards age."

This is a tribute to the aged, who are sufficiently liberal-minded to accept the friendship of youth in face of the proprieties which require that youth should keep at an honourable and respectful distance.

天涯知己: T'in ngai chi-ki. Heaven horizon know-self.

"An unchanging friend."

一諾千金: Yat nok ts'in kam. One promise thousand gold.

"His promise is worth a thousand gold pieces."

唇亡齒寒: Shun mong ch'i hon. Lips lost teeth cold.

"If the lips are lost the teeth become cold."

In other words: "If you are lost I shall be left unprotected."

一日三秋: Yat yat sám ts'au. One day three autumns.

"One day's absence seems like three years."

膠漆相投: Káu ts'at séung t'au. Glue varnish together unite.

"They stick together like varnish and glue."

望到眼都穿: Mong tò ngán tò ch'ün. Look till eyes also perforate.

"I have looked for you till my eyes have almost started out of my head."

莫逆交: Mok ngák káu. No contrary friendship.

"A friendship without differences and disagreements."

忘形交: Mong ying káu. Forget body friendship.

"A friendship that disregards station."

相見恨晚: Séung kin han mán. Mutually see regret late.

"I regret we did not meet each other sooner."

一見如故: Yat kin ü kú. One see as old.

"Like old friends on first meeting."

酒食朋友: Tsau shik p'ang-yau. Wine eat friend.

"A friend in prosperity."

禮尙往還: Lai shéung wong wán. Propriety ought go return.

"Propriety requires reciprocity."

Visits paid must be returned, presents given

must be recompensed by similar gifts, and aid rendered ought to be joyfully repaid.

推心置腹: T'ui sam chi fuk. Push (my) heart place-in (your) stomach.

"Communicate everything."

秀才人情紙半張: Sau-ts'oi yan-ts'ing chi pún chéung. B.A. kindness paper half sheet.

"A literary man's friendship never amounts to more than a note or letter."

光棍遇着無皮柴: Kwong kwan ü-chéuk mô p'i ch'ái. Bare stick met no skin fire-wood.

"The swindler met a sharper."

Each became the other's friend in vain.

乘車戴笠: Shing kü tái lap. Ride carriage wear basket-for-hat.

"Though you become a lord, and I handle the plough we will always be the same."

訂譜結兄弟: Ting p'ò kit hing-tai. Write register unite brothers.

"Swear brotherhood."

Mock registers are filled in by two friends and exchanged. At the same time they worship (天地, T'in-ti:) Heaven (and) Earth by burning incense and lighting candles. To perform this

ceremony with thirteen men is a capital offence.

The reservation is to protect the country from from secret societies.

八拜之交: Pát pái chi káu. Eight bows its friendship. "The eight bows friendship."

After brotherhood has been sworn the two friends kneel to each other eight times.

萬里神交: Mán li shan káu. Ten-thousand li spiritual friendship.

"Spiritual intercourse over 3000 miles."

猪朋狗友: Chü p'ang kau yau. Pig friend's-friends dog friends.

"Bad friends and associates."

撥馬尾: P'út má mi. Fan horse tail.

"Flatter."

接風洗塵: Tsip fung sai ch'an. Welcome wind wash dust.

"Welcome a friend from a great distance by inviting him to a feast."

執手話別: Chap shau wá pit. Hold hand say 'Goodbye.'

"Friends clasp hands when saying 'Goodbye'."

It is not the custom in China either for friends

or strangers to take each others hand, but an exception to the general rule is made in parting.

肝胆相交: Kon tám seúng káu. Liver gall mutual friendship.

"The most intimate friendship."

君子之交淡如水小人之交甜如蜜: Kwan-tsz chi káu t'ám ü shúi siú-yan chi káu t'im ü mat. Ruler-son his friendship tasteless as water small-man his friendship sweet as honey.

"The superior man's friendship is as tasteless as water, the mean man's friendship is as pleasant as honey."

X.

FUNERALS.

死屍曉起身: Sz shi hiú hi shan: Dead corpse understand raise body. "A corpse can rise up."

Superstition affirms that the dead body has increased ability to perform this impossible feat, if the deceased happened to have been born between the 10th and 20th of the month.

福人葬福地: Fuk yan tsong fuk ti: "Happy men (are) buried (in) happy ground."

The idea embodied in these words is, that heaven does not forsake after death, those upon whom it has bestowed its favours during their lifetime, but provides for them a last resting place where they may enjoy immunity from untoward geomantic influences.

陪葬鈚: P'úi tsong ák. Accompany bury bracelet. "The buried-with-the-corpse bracelet."

The Chinese believe, that after a lapse of ten years red veins will appear in the jade ornament thus interred, and that its value will be accordingly increased.

棺材精: Kún-ts'oi tsing. "Coffin apparitions." It is supposed that coffins, kept above ground as they often are until some relatives return from a distant province or from abroad, become the abode of ghosts and phantoms.

孝服: Háu fúk. Mourning garment.

* "Mourning worn for parents."

買水洗面: Mái shúi sai min. Buy water wash face.

"Purchase water for washing the face of the dead."

The purchase is effected in this way: the son goes to the brink of a river or stream, throws in two cash, and then dips up a bowl of water and carries it home. There, a cloth is soaked in the water and passed over the body.

利是錢: Li shi ts'in. Profit this (affair) cash. "A present of lucky cash."

A packet of cash is always given to those, who attend a funeral, just as they are leaving the cemetery, to ward off the unlucky influences associated with the ceremony.

* This includes the sack-cloth worn at the funeral and the white, blue, and black outfits (the hat-button, queue-string, shoes and coat are distinctive) which are worn successively during three years, nine months being counted as one year.

開路: Hoi lò. Open road.
"Prepare a way."

No matter at what hour a person may die, it is customary, as soon as the breath is out of the body, to send a messenger for the necromancer (Nám-Mo) to come and prepare a path for the soul of the departed, that it may not be forced to wander up and down in the world which separates this from heaven and hades: (**陰間**: Yam kán). By lighting candles, burning incense, and mumbling prayers the Nám-Mo is supposed to successfully prepare a way to paradise.

回魂: Ui wan. Return soul.
"The spirit's return."

Part of the duty of the necromancer in opening a way for the soul is to ascertain what day and hour the spirit will visit the home it has left. After pretended communication with the soul the precise time is written on paper and handed to the relatives, who prepare for the spirit a feast of things the deceased like best while alive. During the visit the family remain in bed, and the spirit is supposed to touch them all.

This return of the soul is also known as (回陽: Ui yéung :) "Return to the world."

做七: Tsò ts'at. Do seven. "Keep the seventh day."

During the seven weeks which immediately follow the death of a relative every seventh day is observed as a special day. A feast is provided, the necromancer calls, and during the ceremony performed by him the representatives of the family kneel before the * ancestral tablet set up for the deceased on the idol shrine.

The third seventh day is the most important, for on that occasion all the relatives of the family are supposed to be present. The cost of the fifth seventh day, strange to relate, has, where possible, to be defrayed by the women of the household.

* Vide page 15.

XI.

GAMBLING.

太和洞圍姓詩: T'ái Wo Tung Wai Sing shi.

"The T'ái Wo Tung Wai Sing (lottery.) Poem."

Gamblers believe that the Tai Wo Tung fairy writes in lime by means of a suspended bamboo a piece of poetry which enables them to guess the names of candidates who will be successful at the examinations. The poem, consisting of surnames, is printed on single sheets, and these are sold for one cash each.

買武圍姓抽二除: Mái mò Wai Sing ch'au i ch'ü. Buy military Wai Sing collect two tenths.

"In buying the military Wai Sing Lottery tickets two tenths are collected."

Twenty per cent of all gains is retained by the Wai Sing shop-keepers as profit.

拜死屍求票: Pái sz shi k'au piú. Worship dead corpse seek ticket.

"Seek a (lucky) lottery ticket by worshipping a corpse."

This horrible custom is quite common in Canton, and it is not infrequently observed in the country.

豬肉票: Chü-yuk piú. Pig-flesh ticket. "Pork tickets."

At the end of the Chinese year the people indulge in gambling for pieces of pork for which tickets are issued. Those who guess the weight obtain the prize.

大殺三方: Tái shát sám fong. Great kill three point. "Great wins on three sides."

The proprietors of *Fantan* houses write these four characters on a slip of paper which they paste on the wall as a good omen.

The game of *Fantan* which fascinates the Chinese, and casts its spell over a certain class of foreigners is very simple. A heap of cash is placed in the centre of the table, and the gamesters stake money on the number of cash which shall remain after the cash have been removed by the saloon-keeper in fours until the number left is either four, three, two, or one. The gambler bets on

one number only, and hence the proprietor has three chances to one. One would naturally have imagined, that the prospects of the patron and not of the proprietor would have been advertised.

不賭是贏錢: Pat tò shi ying t'sin. Not gamble is win money.

"Not to gamble is to win money."

斬指戒賭: Chám chi kái tò. Cut-off finger refrain-from gamble.

"Chop off a finger in order to abstain from gambling."

Resolutions made and vows taken are sometimes sealed by removing part of a finger.

求票: K'au piú. Beg ticket.

"Pray to the idols for (lucky) lottery tickets."

Such travesty of worship illustrates the strange conceptions the Chinese have of their deities. They evidently look upon them as beings either possessing, or lacking moral attributes as suits the worshipper's need and circumstances.

壽誕點票: Shau tán tim piú. Longevity birthday dot ticket.

"Mark a * Siu Wai Sing lottery ticket on your birthday."

The day is considered auspicious, and the inference is that the choice made is almost certain to bring luck.

贏番攤跟尾: Ying fán-t'án kan mi: "The winner of *Fantan* stakes has followers."

Unfortunate gamblers watch fortunate individuals and follow them out of the room to beg for a share of their gains.

賭乃盜之源: Tò nai tò chi ün. Gambling is robbery its source.

"Gambling is the origin of theft."

鬥牛: Tau ngau. Fight buffalo. "Gamble."

This name, which literally means 'a buffalo fight,' is applied to the lowest form of gambling. The proprietors of houses where gamblers meet to *Tau ngau* allow their patrons to continue playing after they have lost their cash and

* These tickets formerly known as *Pák-kop-piú* have the first 80 characters of the "Thousand Character Classic" printed on them. Only ten may be marked by gamblers though the number selected by the saloon-keepers for the people to guess is 20. These tickets are issued twice daily. Every one who guesses 5 or more of the 20 characters obtains a prize of money.

the clothes they stand up in. Should the player have a run of ill-luck and become the proprietor's debtor to the extent of several dollars, he is bound and imprisoned in a separate room, which is termed: (牛監: Ngau kám) "Buffalo prison." Once confined, the proprietors adopt rigorous and cruel measures to extort from their prisoner a request to forward a letter to his friends begging them to pay the amount of his debt and so release him from treatment which would end in his death.

The laws of the present dynasty prohibit gambling: but during the Boxer Year the Viceroy's coffers were so depleted and the demands from the central government so extravagant, that Li Hung Chang legalised the vice in order to secure a large additional revenue.

打牌: Tá p'ái. Strike dominoes.

"Play dominoes."

This gambling game may be seen wherever a number of men are collected together without anything to do. On the streets, on wharves, and on passage-boats, in shops, restaurants, and homes men group themselves round a table, or a mat on the floor, to try their fortune.

擲骰: Chák shik. Throw-down dice.

"Play with dice."

圍姓獨得: Wai Sing túk tak. Wai Sing alone get.

"May you alone win the Wai Sing Lottery stakes."

The middle and lower classes often add this phrase in congratulating their friends at New Year, and not infrequently the four characters are written on a slip of paper and pasted up in the shop or home, but in this case the words mean;

"May *I* alone win the Wai Sing Lottery stakes."

XII.

GEOMANCY.

打瘦狗嶺因曉出天子: T'a sau kau ling yan hiú ch'ut t'in-tsz. Strike lean dog hill because understands produce heaven-son.

"Shoot the Lean Dog Hill for it can produce Emperors."

This hill outside the Great East Gate of Canton, is cannonaded every year during the first two weeks of the 11th moon. It is possible that target practice gave rise to this popular belief.

風水佬能保人丁財貴壽: Fung-shui lò nang pò yan ting ts'oi kwai shau. Fung-shui fellow able guarantee man sons, wealth, honour, longevity.

"Geomancers are able to guarantee a man, heirs, wealth, honour, and long life."

The geomancer is supposed to learn the secret as to which burial ground will cause the descendants of the family to flourish.

改名合五行: Koi ming hop ng háng. Change name agree Five Elements.

"In giving names let them be in agreement with the Five Elements," *i. e.* the Element absent in the horoscope must enter into the name bestowed as a radical. The astrologer is fee'd to indicate which of * 金, 木, 水, 火, 土 is missing.

家山發: Ká shán fát. Family mountain produce.

"The Family tombs cause (the descendants) to flourish."

執骨遷葬後人發達: Chap kwat ts'in tsong hau yan fát-tát. Pick-up bones move bury after men flourish.

"If the bones of one's ancestors are taken up, moved, and reburied, the descendants flourish."

This superstition, which is as firmly rooted as it is general, accounts for the number of gold pagodas, (as the jars containing the bones of the dead are called) placed in niches on the hill side, or under the banks which enclose a cultivated area.

Geomancers (風水先生) are paid to take their geomantic compass and point out a lucky spot whereon or wherein to place the bones that have been disinterred.

* Gold, wood, water, fire, earth. (Kam, muk, shúi, fo, t'ò).

一善: Yat shin. One goodness.
"Single goodness."

Strips of paper with these two characters written thereon are pasted over the front door to ward off evil influences termed: (殺氣) *Shát Hi.*

瓦鷄瓦炮: Ngà kai ngà p'au. "Earthenware cock, Earthenware cannon."

These are placed on the roofs of houses and prevent, it is thought, the approach of evil spirits.

山田墜: Shán t'in chúi. Mountain field fall.
"Low burial ground."

Though in places necessity compels the Chinese to inter their dead in low-lying ground, yet it is considered very unlucky to do so.

風水尾卽愚蠢懶: Fung-shui mi tsik üch'un lán. Wind water end immediately foolish lazy.

"As soon as the *Fung-shui* (*i.e.* the geomantic influences from the graves) comes to an end, the descendants become ignorant and lazy."

祖根發: Tso kan fát Ancestral root spring-up.
"Ancestral roots (*i.e.* existing members of a family) flourish."

This is true, of course, only when the *Fung-shui* is good.

男雙女單: Nám shéung nü tán. Male even female odd.

"A male is even, a female single or odd."

Man's constitution partakes of the active principle, (陽) Yéung, which is considered double oreven : whereas woman's nature is derived from the passive principle, (陰) Yam, which is single or odd. And hence in *choosing lucky days and medicines this distinction is always carefully observed.

* Vide page 4.

XIII.

IDOLS & SPIRITS.

神仙粉: Shan sin fan. Spirit fairy powder. "Fairy powder."

More than ten years ago an epidemic raged in Canton and Fatshan which carried off hundreds of people, and for want of a scientific explanation, it was believed that the fairies were guilty of poisoning the wells by dropping powder into them.

接引財神: Tsip yan ts'oi shan. Receive lead wealth god. "Receive and entice the god of wealth."

These four characters are written on red slips of paper which on New Year's Day are pasted on the lintels of doors, and at the side or on the face of shrines outside shops and private houses. Of all the deities in the Chinese pantheon this god has, perhaps, most votaries.

青龍: Tsing lung. "Green dragon."

This is the designation of a snake kept by some temple-keepers. It is worshipped by women only. They burn incense to it, and pray it to

keep the skin of their children as smooth and glossy, and as free from boils, prickly-heat and scrofula as its own.

新土地要去張天師處領劄: San t'ò ti iú hü chéung t'in sz ch'ü ling táp.

New To-ti need go Cheung-T'in-Sz place get credentials.

"A new Earth God must first go to the abode of Cheung T'in Sz and obtain credentials."

All houses and streets possess this idol, which is most frquently reresented by a strip of red paper with the idol's name on it, and the term of office is either one or three years. The shrine of Chéung T'in Sz is in Lung-Fu-Shán in the Kiang-Si province.

雷神手持鑿脚踏鼓: Lúi shan shau ch'i tsok kéuk táp kú. Thunder spirit hand hold chisel feet tread drum.

"The God of Thunder holds a chisel in his hands and his feet tread on a drum."

社頭頂天: Shé t'au ting t'in. Shé head reaches heaven.

"The Grain God's head touches heaven."

This idol is never covered; but is so placed

that light falls directly upon it.

床頭婆: Ch'ong t'au p'o. "Bed-head Grandmother."

This idol is worshipped when the child cries.

舞獅祛疫: Mò sz k'ü yik. Dance lion expel plague.

"The dancing lion drives away plague."

Upon a recrudescence of this epidemic the dancing lion is in great request in Canton. The beating of gongs and firing of crackers, which form the accompaniment to the wonderful performances of this popular deity, evidently impress the Chinese, who, unlike Westerners, are notoriously fond of a noise, and the more nearly the din resembles pandemonium the greater the delight of the on-lookers. The crackers are provided by the people living in the streets through which the procession passes.

鬼怕硃砂: Kwai p'á chü-shá. "Demons fear Chü Sha."

Chü Sha is a kind of red ink used in writing charms.

靈神難護失時人: Ling shan nán ú shat shi yan.

Intelligent spirit hard protect lose time man.

"Intelligent (*i.e.* prayer answering) idols find it difficult to protect unlucky men."

廣東舞神棍最大權: Kwong tung mò shan kwan tsü tái k'ün. Kwang tung dance spirit swindler very great power.

"Canton play-at-idol swindlers have the greatest power."

These pseudo-temple–keepers pay men to spread false rumours to the effect, that the idols in their temples are (靈) *ling*, 'intelligent, prayer answering,' and when the public, ever ready to credit the latest fabrication of the fortune-hunter, hear of some wonderful idol, off they go in flocks to pray for the * "five happinesses," or the happiness for which they have, thus far, sought in vain. By this cunning artifice the swindler does wield great power, for he draws men and women miles from their homes to the shrine of which he has charge, which is situated outside some country village

* **丁, 財, 貴, 祿, 壽**: Sons, wealth, honour, emolument, longevity.

or far up the mountain side, only to enrich himself at their expense; since, believing in the efficacy of worship at this celebrated temple they leave considerable sums with the temple-keeper, that the temple lamp may not grow dim for want of oil, and that the fragrant incense may not cease to rise before the face of the beneficent idol.

不分神鬼: Pat fan shan Kwai. Not divide spirits demons.

"Spirits and demons cannot be distinguished."

上神油: Shéung shan yau. Go-up spirit oil.

"Present idol, or spirit, oil."

The abbreviated phrase designates the custom of the worshipper, who sometimes pays the temple-keeper as much as $100—to keep the temple light burning as a thank-offering for recovery from sickness. More often, however, the supplicants in praying, promise large sums which, when the clouds of trouble have passed, are entirely forgotten.

神馬: Shan má. "(The) spirit horse."

A horse is gaily caparisoned, and left to walk riderless in the procession, it being believed that a spirit occupies the saddle.

瞶神怕竹葉: Fán shan p'á chuk ip.

"The irritable (or, easily provoked) spirit fears bamboo leaves."

火燒酬答神恩: Fo shiú ch'au táp shan yan.

Fire burn libation answer spirit favour.

"After a fire a libation of wine must be poured out as a thank-offering for the favour shown by the spirits," i. e., in that the calamity was not greater. Even those involved in the loss occasioned by the accident give their share.

神鬼不着褲: Shan kwai pat chéuk fú. Spirits demons not wear lower-garments.

"Spirits and demons do not wear nether garments."

破財神: P'o ts'oi shan. Split wealth spirit.

"Split the God of wealth."

Loss, by accident, robbery, or by failure to obtain remittances expected, gives occasion for the use of this irreverent phrase.

土地接水: T'ò ti tsip shui. Tò-ti meet water.

"The Earth God meets water."

The meaning is that the paper representation of the deity is placed on the side of the shop opposite

to which the drain water flows. This position secures prosperity to the inmates of the house or shop.

菩薩好看女色: P'ò-sát hò hon nü shik. Idols love look female beauty.

"Idols love to look upon women."

This remark has reference to the great numbers of the fair sex, who go to temples to worship the idols.

鬼怕符印: Kwai p'á fú yan. Demons afraid charms seals.

"Demons are afraid of charms and seals."

潮連大王鑒聖曉面紅: Ch'iu Lin tai wong kám shing hiú min hung. Ch'iu Lin great Emperor Kám Shing understands face red.

"The Tai Wong Kám Shing idol in Ch'iu Lin blushes."

胥江神好看戲: Sü kong shan hò hon hi. Sü kong idol loves look theatrical.

"The Sü-Kong idol loves to watch a theafrical display."

煽神七刹: Fán shan ts'at ch'at. Provoke spirit seven pillar.

"There are seven deadly directions by pursuing which you provoke the spirits." These are pointed out in the Almanac.

拜神肉香拜鬼肉臭: Pái shan yuk héung pái kwai yuk ch'au. Worship spirits meat fragrant worship demons meat unsavoury.

"Meat offered to idols is sweet-smelling; that offered to devils is malodorous."

信之則有不信則無: Sun chi tsak yau pat sun tsak mò. Believe them then have, not believe then none.

"If you believe in *spirits then they exist; but if you do not then there are none."

見怪不怪其怪自滅: Kin kwái pat kwái k'i kwái tsz mit. See ghosts not ghosts those ghosts naturally destroyed.

"If you look upon all apparitions as not being such then they naturally disappear."

* This applies to all supernatural beings whether good or evil.

XIV.

LAWSUITS.

肉在砧板上任你施爲: Yuk tsoi champan shéung yam nei shi-wai. Meat (is) on chopping-board above allow you administer do.

"He is at your mercy (to the official) you can work your will."

生不入官門死不入地獄: Shang pat yap kún mún sz pat yap ti yuk. Living not enter official door and dead not enter earth-prison.

"While living do not enter a yamên and after death do not enter Hades."

打得利害偷井都要認: Ta tak li hoi t'au tsing tò iú ying. Beat get excessively theft-of well even must acknowledge.

"If a man is tortured excessively he will even acknowledge that he has stolen a well."

供仇不供黨: Kung ch'au pat kung tong. Supply enemy not supply faction.

"Men will give up their enemies, but not their friends."

Heads of villages are often charged to hand over offenders to justice on penalty of having the village destroyed.

圖告不圖審: T'ò kò pat t'ò sham. Wishes petition not wish judge.

"He wishes to make known his distress, but not to have his case judged."

Often a plaintiff desires only that the official should frighten his enemies.

一聲喊叫合衙歡: Yat shing hám kiú hop ngá fún. One noise crying calling whole yamên rejoices.

"The noise of crying and calling makes the whole yamên rejoice."

In the cry, "Help!" or, "Save life!" there is money. From the lowest menial to the necklaced gentleman of the red table each will get his squeeze.

一世做官三世做乞兒: Yat shai tso kún sám shai tso hat-i. One generation be official three generations be beggars.

"If one generation of a family takes office the next three will be beggars."

This is the popular view of what the magistrate's descendants ought to suffer for his sins of

extortion, injustice, and cruelty.

By nothing is the corrupt state of the Chinese government more strongly and severely condemned than by the language of the country.

無事少登堂: Mò sz shiú tang t'ong. No affair seldom ascend hall.

"If you've no case do not enter a yamên."

Once in the meshes of the law it is an easy thing to lose everything one possesses and also one's liberty, hence the sound advice.

鄉下佬唔發顛衙門佬唔賺錢: Héung-há lò m fát tin ngá-mún lò m chán ts'in. Country fellow not contract mad yamên fellow not make money.

"If the country folk did not develop insanity (*i.e.* quarrel &c.) the yamên people would make no money."

Seeing the net spread the people are still foolish enough to run into it.

紅頭繩作辮線: Hung t'au shing tsok pin sin. Red head string makes queue thread.

"Make a queue string of a piece of red string."

"To enter a yamên and have one's case tried by the magistrate is both uncanny and unlucky, and hence, a piece of red string is carried in teh

pocket, and when a plaintiff or defendant leaves the court he plaits the red string into the end of his queue to cut off the associations which might entail disaster.

見了紅桌圍就失魂: Kin liú hung chéuk wai tsau shat wan. See already red table curtain then lose soul.

"Having caught sight of the red (judgment) table with its curtain the prisoner straightway faints."

The terror in which officials and Yamêns are held can only be appreciated by those who have lived amongst the people and know how the power of arrest, confiscation, torture and death may be abused by those in whom it is vested.

入到老城心膽寒: Yap to lò shing sam tam hon. Enter at old city heart gall shiver.

"To enter into the old city makes a man tremble from head to foot." Inside the old walled city of Canton are all the important official residences (Yamêns) of the Kwangtung province."

鷸蚌相持漁人得利: Kwat p'ong séung ch'i ü yan tak li. Snipe oyster together clinging fisherman get benefit.

"When snipe and oyster cling together in fighting the fisherman obtains the benefit."

刀筆殺人不見血: Tò pat shàt yan pat kin hüt.

Knife brush (pen) kill man not see blood.

"When the knife pen writes out death sentences (lit. kills men) no blood is seen."

It is easy to sign away men lives. Given a strong man and the necessity, as we witnessed during the Boxer Year in the case of Li Hung Chang, there seems to be no hesitancy in ordering seventy and eighty executions a day.

賊過如梳兵過如篦: Ts'ák kwo ü sho ping kwo ü pi. Robbers pass like comb soldiers pass like small-comb."

"When robbers pass a place it is like combing the head with a large comb, but when soldiers pass it is like using a small-toothed one."

In other words, robbers in private clothes are preferable to those in uniform, since the latter show no mercy, whereas the former do leave something behind.

This is eloquent testimony to the soldiers of China by the people themselves.

XV.

MARRIAGE.

娶妻不娶同姓: Ts'ü ts'ai pat ts'ü t'ung sing. Marry wife not marry same surname.

"In marrying a wife you may not marry a lady of the same surname as yourself."

This rule, which is rigidly adhered to, is based on the belief that all people of the same surname, though separated by several provinces, are descended from the same clan.

娶婦題四句禮乎: Ts'ü fú t'ai sz kü lai fú. Marry woman suggest four phrases propriety.

"At a marriage it is the rule to suggest four phrases."

These lines are a trial to the bride, who is fined if she cannot repeat them correctly after one hearing. Instances, not infrequent, are related of brides being cruelly treated, because they have refused to comply with this custom when obscene rhymes have been suggested by friends of the bridegroom.

新婦轎久坐乃好品性: San fú k'iu kau ts'o nái hò pan-sing. New bride sedan-chair long sit is good temperament.

"If the bride sit in the chair a long time (prior to her reception by the bridegroom) she will be of a good temperament."

嫁娶騎頭: Ká-ts'ü k'i t'au. Marriage ride head.

"Ride over the head in marriage."

This phrase is used of the younger brother or sister marrying before the elder.

反新婦: Fán san fú. Tease new bride.

"Tease the bride."

The ordeal, which has already been referred to as consisting in repeating any four phrases which may be suggested, though not trying *per se*, often causes pain when the guest's privilege is abused. The room in which the bride is exposed to the stare and jests of the bridegroom's friends is termed: "Náu Fong" (**鬧房**).

迎親轎切莫過汾流街: Ying ts'an kiú ts'it mok kwo fan lau kái. Meet relative sedan-chair imperative not pass Divide Flow street.

"The chair sent to fetch the bride must on no account pass through Fan Lau street."

The allusion to anything inauspicious on the eventful day must be studiously avoided, and hence a street the name of which suggests separation is tabooed.

上頭婆好命新人亦好命: Shéung t'au p'o hò ming san yan yik hó ming.

Above head grand-mother good decree new man also good decree.

"If the woman who waits on the bride (i.e. dresses her hair the night previous to the marriage) has a good decree (from heaven) then the bride will also have a good decree."

迎親過快子街: Ying ts'an kwo fái-tsz kái. Meet relative pass quick-son street.

"The wedding chair should pass through Chopsticks' Street."

Seeing that the characters rendered correctly, "Chopsticks," may, taken literally, be translated 'quick son' the augury is obvious.

月老爲媒: Üt lò wai múi. Moon old man is match-maker.

*"The old man in the moon is the match-maker."

* Vide chapter on "Superstitious Beliefs."

XVI.

MEDICINE.

藥渣潑出街心病即愈: Yéuk chá p'ut ch'ut kai sam ping tsik ü. Medicine dregs throw out street heart sickness immediately cured.

"If the dregs which remain after boiling a decoction of medicine be thrown into the middle of the street the sickness is soon cured."

大轎先生脉理明: Tài kiú sin-shang mák li ming. Great sedan-chair * *First-born* pulse principles understand.

"The doctor, who keeps his carriage, understands the principles of the pulse."

With the Chinese, as with other nations, popularity is regarded as an infallible sign of merit. And as each vital organ is supposed to have its pulse, to know the pulse is to be able to diagnose almost any disease to which the human body is liable.

* The title given to teachers and representatives of the literary class generally.

科場燭照痘: Fo ch'éung chuk chiú tau. Examination area candle shine-upon smallpox.

"Let the light of a candle taken from the Examination Hall shine on a smallpox patient." Tradition affirms that cures have been effected in this way.

方脉: Fong mák. Points pulse.

"The various pulses."

萬應: Mán ying. Ten-thousand answer.

"A cure for all ills."

No Chinese drug store is without preparations which are guaranteed as infallible remedies for every form of disease.

參茸補身: Sam yung pò shan. Sam yung nourish body.

"*Sam* and *Yung* are tonics."

Sam is Chinese ginseng, and *Yung* is scraped deer-horn."

瘋不落河: Fúng pat lok ho. Leprosy not go-down river.

"Grisettes cannot take leprosy."

洋烟能去病: Yéung in nang hü ping. Ocean tobacco able remove sickness.

"Opium cures diseases."

Opium is also supposed to lengthen a man's life. Now and again the people have accidently discovered the uses of the drug, and hence ascribe to it all kinds of imaginary powers.

食祭幽飽無肚痛： Shik tsai yau páu mò tô t'ung. Eat sacrifice purgatory cakes no stomach ache.

"If you eat cakes offered in sacrifice to hades you do not suffer from stomach-ache."

拐子佬摩頭能跟他去： Kwái tsz lò mo t'au nang kun t'a hü. Kidnap child fellow rub head able follow him go.

"A kidnapper by rubbing a child's head can make the child follow him."

The medicine rubbed in makes the child think there is water on either side and a tiger behind. There is certainly neither lack of imagination nor of credulity in this graphic explanation.

如不愈原銀送回： Ü pat ü ün ngan sung úi. If not cured origin silver present back.

"If you are not cured I will return the fee."

Native doctors make such promises but seldom keep them.

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包醫: Páu i. "Guarantee (a) cure."

The Chinese, who love bargaining, carry this practice into every branch of life.

符治發冷: Fú chi fát-láng. Charms regulate produce-cold.

"Charms cure ague."

Charms used by the people in the South are largely written. There is one man who is celebrated as an ague doctor in Canton. He informed me that his prescription has not failed once. He writes a charm on paper according to the age of the patient, and wraps in it a piece of ginger and gives it to him to carry in his coat pocket.

月頭積虫頭向上: Üt t'au tsik ch'ung t'au héung shéung. Month head worm-insects head point upwards.

"During the first half of the month the worms' heads point upwards."

飯虫去了則無胃: Fán ch'ung hü liú tsak mò wai. Rice insects go already then no appetite.

"When the rice worms are gone then a person has no appetite."

消瘡符: Siú ch'ong fú. Reduce boils charms.

"The charm that reduces swellings."

The charm, which consists of mysterious figures or characters written on paper, is burnt, and then the ashes are drunk in tea.

籐鈪追風: Tang ák chúi fung. Rattan bracelet drive wind.

"Rattan bracelets expel rheumatism."

打醮乃種痘: Tá tsiú nái chung tau. Tá Tsiú then plant lymph

"Vaccinate after a *Tá Tsiú*."

因牙崩口: Yan ngá pang hau. Because teeth crack mouth.

"Harelip is caused by (projecting) teeth."

捉牙虫: Chuk ngá ch'ung. Catch teeth insects.

"Extract teeth worms."

Tooth-ache is believed to be caused either by *wind*, *fire*, or *worms* in the teeth.

熟烟化痰: Shuk in fá t'am. Cured tobacco dissolves phlegm.

"Tobacco breaks up phlegm."

龍舟送瘡: Lung chau sung ch'ong. Dragon boat escorts boil.

"Dragon boats carry off boils."

A piece of paper is rubbed over the swelling, and then placed on the toy dragon boat, which is placed on the river and allowed to sail away. From that time the patient begins to recover.

茄楠珠止屎急: K'á-Nám chü chi shi kap. K'é Nám beads stop fæces urgency.

"K'é-Nám beads stop diarrhœa."

K'é-Nám is a fragrant wood, and the wearing of a string of beads made from it, is very common.

合年期乃可種洋痘: Hop nin k'i nái ho chung yéung tau. Agree year time then may plant Ocean (Western) smallpox-lymph.

"Vaccination must be performed at the proper season."

This has reference both to the age of the person and the time of the year.

割股和藥飼親: Kot kú wo yéuk tsz ts'an. Cut thigh mix medicine give-to-eat parents.

"Cut (flesh from) the thigh, mix it with medicine, and give it to one's parents to eat."

That this self-sacrificing act has been performed has been verified in mission hospitals. The people believe in the efficacy of human flesh when other remedies fail.

包月: Páu üt. "Guarantee (for one) month."

As the people consider the first month of a child's life the most dangerous, doctors make money by undertaking to see that the child lives through that period.

苦口是良藥: Fú hau shi leúng yéuk. Bitter mouth is good medicine.

"Medicine, that is bitter to the taste, is good."

Another way of putting this is: **良藥苦口利於病**: Léung yéuk fú hau li ü ping. Good medicine bitter mouth benefit in sickness.

"Good medicine is bitter to the taste, but it cures the disease."

西藥好霸道: Sai yéuk hò pá tò. Western medicine very tyrannical way.

"Western medicine is a terror."

Its good or ill effects are felt at once.

XVII.

MILITARY.

兵者凶器天道惡之不得已而用之: Ping ché hung hi t'in tò ú chi pat tak i i yung chi. Munitions-of-war those murderous weapons heavenly doctrine hates them not able stop so use them.

"The doctrines (revealed from) heaven hate the murderous munitions of war, and they are only used by reason of necessity."

The Chinese are preminently a peace-loving people.

寧作太平犬勿爲亂世人: Ning tsok t'ai-ping hün mat wai lün shai yan. Prefer be peace dog do-not be insurrection world man.

"To be a dog in times of peace is preferable to being a man during periods of rebellion."

聲東擊西: Shing tung kik sai, Sound East attack West.

"Arouse the East and attack the West."

腹背受敵: Fuk púi shau tik. Stomach back receive enemy.

"Caught between enemies ahead and enemies in the rear."

夷敵可以計破難用兵猝也: I tik ho i kai p'o nán yung ping ts'üt ya. I enemies may with trick split difficult use soldiers expel.

"Barbarian enemies may be dispersed by tricks, but it is difficult to drive them out by force of arms."

大兵之後必有凶年: Tái ping chi hau pit yau hung nin. Great soldiers its afterwards certainly have empty year.

"After a great war there is sure to be a famine."

師起因饑: Sz hi yan ki. "Troops are-raised because (of) famine."

The reason is that famine is often the precursor of rebellion.

立屍之地: Láp shi chi ti. Stand corpse its ground.

"The battle-field." "A dangerous post."

寄身鋒刀: Ki shan fung tò. Send body point knife.

"Charge the enemy at the point of the bayonet."

一將功成萬骨枯: Yat tséung kung shing mán kwat fú. One general merit complete ten-thousand bone decay.

"By the time an officer rises to the rank of 'general' ten thousand soldiers have fallen in battle."

男兒當死疆場以馬革裹屍還壯耳: Nán i tong sz kéung ch'eung i má kák kwo shi wan tsong i. Male boys ought die border area use horse harness wrap corpse return bury only.

"Men should fight to the death on the battle field, and allow their bodies to be brought back for burial wrapped in the trappings of their horses."

吾之勁敵: Ng chi king tik. Self (I) its strong enemy.

"My well-matched enemy."

軍師: Kwan sz. Regiment officer.

"Chief-of-Staff."

In colloquial this title is used derisively of those who always find fault with the details of everything.

* 賊過如梳兵過如篦:

有盜賊興必有干戈至: Yau tò ts'ák hing pit yau kon kwo chi. Have pirates robbers flourish certainly shield spear come.

"Wherever robbers and pirates rise thither soldiers will go."

* Vide page 110.

XVIII.

OMENS.

初更鷄啼火二更鷄啼賊: Ch'o káng kai t'ai fo i káng kai t'ai ts'ák. First watch cock crow fire, second watch cock crow thieves.

"If the cock crow during the first watch of the night there will be a fire, and if during the second there will be a robbery."

眼眉跳有人講: Ngán mi t'iú yau yan kong Eye brow dance have man speak.

"Unconsious blinking is caused by someone speaking about you."

This is similar to the English superstition that for the same reason one's ears burn. The Chinese, however, remark that the tingling sensation, called "burning," is a sign that it will be warm the next day.

通勝: T'ung shing. Intercommunicate victory "Almanac."

The proper name of the Chinese Almanac is T'úng Shü (intercommunicate book) but as the word for book has precisely the same sound and

tone as the character meaning "loss" or "defeat" another is substituted, because the use of the word is unlucky, and especially is it inauspicious at the commencement of the year, when almanacs are purchased.

通書早買爲妙: T'ung-Shü tsò mái wai miú. Almanac early purchase is excellent.

"It is best to purchase an almanac early."

鴉鳴凶: Á ming hung. Crow call inauspicious.

"The crow's call is inauspicious."

鵲鳴吉: Sék ming kat. Magpie call auspicious.

"The magpie's call is auspicious."

人講己噴嚏: Yan kong ki p'an-t'ai. Man speak self sneeze.

"When a person speaks of one's self one sneezes," or, "Whenever people talk about you, you sneeze"

手指開爲貴: Shau chi hoi wai kwai. Hand finger open is honour.

"If the fingers (of a newly born child) are open the child will be exalted."

錢銀作利是: Tsin ngan tsok li shi. Cash silver considered benefit this (affair).

"Presents of cash and silver are considered lucky."

The money is always wrapped in red paper.

閏八月不利: Yun pát üt pat li. Intercalary eight month not lucky.

"The intercalary eighth month is inauspicious."

The solar year having been miscalculated by Chinese astronomers, they have recourse to an extra month once in three years to correct the error. The cycle of time in China is sixty years, and, not as with us, a century. As regards the saying quoted, it has proved only too true as a matter of history.

During the early part of 1900, before there were any definite signs of trouble, the Chinese frequently remarked that as there was an intercalary eighth month some dread calamity might be expected.

XIX.

PROVERBS.

謀事在人成事在天: Mau sz tsoi yan shing sz tsoi t'in. Plan affairs rests-with man, complete affairs rests-with heaven.

"Man proposes, but God disposes."

防患于未萌: Fong wán ü mi máng. Prepare calamity while not-yet bud.

"Prepare for trouble ere it come upon you."

生不顧魂死不顧屍: Sháng pat kú wan sz pat kú shi. Living not regard soul dead not regard corpse.

"While living care not for the soul, and after death care not for the body."

小杖受大杖走: Siú chéung shau tái chéung tsau. Little rod receive big rod run.

"Receive chastisement when light, but if it threatens to be severe run away."

This is a filial saying, since the child's fear

is that the parent might administer punishment which, ending fatally, would entail everlasting regret.

覆水難收: Fúk shui nán shau. Overturned water difficult gather-up.

"Don't cry over spilled milk."

一波未平一波又起: Yat po mi ping yat po yau hi. One wave not-yet smooth one wave again rises.

"It never rains but it pours."

一人見短二人見長: Yat yan kin tün i yan kin ch'éung. One man see short two men see long.

"Two heads are better than one."

本地薑唔辣: Pún ti kêung m lát. Original place ginger not pungent. "A prophet is not without honour save in his own country."

禍不單行: Wo pat tán háng. Calamities not single walk.

"Misfortunes never come singly."

寧苦不死: Ning fú pat sz. Prefer bitter not die.

"Better suffer than die."

時不再來: Shi pat tsoi loi. Time not again come.

"Lost opportunities never return."

天有不測之風雲人有霎時之禍福: T'in yau pat ch'ák chi fung wan yan yau sháp shi chi wo fúk. Heaven has not guess its winds clouds, man has sudden time its calamity happiness.

"Man's fortune changes as suddenly as the weather."

作舍道旁: Tsok shé tò p'ong. Make house road side.

"Build a house by the road-side."

The meaning is that, on account of the totally different advice given by those who pass by, the house is never completed. The English equivalent is: "Too many cooks spoil the broth."

XX.

SLAVERY.

良賤爲婚: Léung tsin wai fan. Citizen bondman make marriage.

"Marriage between a citizen and a slave."

This is forbidden by law.

三世不做官不考試: Sám shai pat tsò kún pat háu-shi. Three generation not be official not take-examination. Freedmen can neither take office nor sit for an examination till three generations are passed.

妹仔丁: Múi tsai ting. Sister little tiny.

"A slave girl." Also known as: **妹仔**.

There are thousands of these girls in Canton. Wealthy families buy several, but always marry them to suitable persons when they become of age.

The treatment these slave girls receive is sometimes so harsh and cruel as to lead to suicide ; but, as a whole, their lot is not nearly so hard as one is apt to imagine.

家生崽: Ká shang t'ai. Family born child. "A child born in the family."

A boy purchased as a slave is thus designated.

家人父子: Ká yan fu tsz. Family man father son. "A slave is like one of the family."

During the present dynasty the practice of keeping male slaves has almost died out.

In this Kwangtung province, the San Ning district stands alone as being famous for the number of male slaves that have been bondmen for many generations.

XXI.

SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS.

上天學法: Shéung t'in hok fát. Ascend heaven learn method.

"You must ascend to heaven to learn to fight."

The ascension takes place by the hypnotic process. The Boxers were hypnotised during 1900, and when they awoke from the hypnotic sleep, believed themselves to be impervious to shells and bullets. Not long since the writer was informed, that hypnotism guarantees victory for a single day; but that after that the effect is lost, and hence the utter rout of the Boxer troops by the Allied Forces.

整定: Ching ting. Made certain.

"It was so decreed."

To every unenlightened Chinaman this doctrine of fatalism is the final and sufficient explanation of all the fortunes and misfortunes that overtake individuals and nations.

破地獄: P'o ti yuk. Split earth-prison.
* "Open hell."

Every necromancer is believed to possess the power to save men from the punishments inflicted on the souls of the departed in the lower regious. Hence a wizard is almost invariably called in after a death in the family to work his miracle.

年月日時做命: Nin üt yat shi tso ming. Year, month, day, hour make decree.

"A year, a month, a day, and an hour form a decree."

In the child's horoscope astrologers presume to read heaven's will concerning the child's future.

泥水做木之人曉整鬼: Nai-shui tsò-muk chi yan hiú ching kwai. Earth-water make-wood their men understand make devils.

"Builders and carpenters know how to make devils."

It is believed that they make them and leave them inside the houses they erect, and that the occupants are afterwards injured in consequence.

*Vide page 86.

病人難過節: Ping yan nán kwo tsit. Sick man difficult pass festival.

"Sick people seldom survive a calendarial festival."

This kind of belief is not peculiar to the East. How often has it been prognosticated that the soul would slip away at the turn of the tide, at dawn, or at the change of the season.

欽州使紙錢: Yam chau shai chi ts'in.

"(At) Yam Chau (they) use paper money."

Yam Chau is supposed to be not far from Sheol, and this paper currency burned for the use of the spirits has eyes printed upon it.

蕉樹精: Tsiú shü tsing. "(The) banana tree (is) subtle."

The belief is that in time the tree is metamorphosed into different apparitions, for example, the ghosts of men and women.

The transformation occurs after a period of three years, hence the custom of cutting down these trees every three years.

酬神要好日乃獲福: Ch'au shan iú hò yat nái wok fúk. Thank idols need good day then get blessing.

"When thank-offering libations are presented

to the idols a lucky day must be chosen in order to obtain a blessing."

論命不論能: Lun ming pat lun nang. Question decree not question ability."

"Everything is a matter of heaven's decree, and not of man's ability."

神荼鬱壘啖鬼: Shan-T'ò Wat-Lúi tám kwai. "Shan-T'ò Wat-Lúi eat demons."

These two idols are deified exorcists, and at New Year their names are posted on the doors of houses occupied by the well-to-do.

婦人包脚乃明理: Fú-yan páu keuk nai ming li. Women wrap feet then understand principles.

"Small-footed women are intelligent."

Herein we discover another incentive–an appeal to pride–to submit to the cruel practice.

不言乾: Pat in kon. Not speak dry.

"Do not use the word kon (dry)." An empty purse is said to be 'dry,' and hence to use the word is unlucky.

過清明洗頭祖要飲茶仔水: Kwo Ts'ing-Ming sai t'au tsò iú yam ch'a tsai shui.

Pass Ts'ing Ming wash head ancestors must drink tea little water.

"If the head be washed (within one month) after Ts'ing Ming the person's ancestors have to drink the soapy (ch'a tsai) water."

As no Chinaman would think of thus insulting his progenitors the rule of waiting one month after the worship of the graves is strictly adhered to in common practice.

楊柳能治外鬼: Yéung lau nang chi ngoi kwai. Spreading willow able regulate outside demons.

"The weeping willow has power to suppress demons unconnected with the family."

Branches of this tree are fastened to the doorways of houses and to the stern or coverings of boats on Ts'ing Ming–the spring festival when the graves of ancestors are worshipped. There is some virtue in the branches, which has a preventive influence on rambling devils, that might desire to enter and wreck the health and happiness of the home.

The practice is so common, that it cannot have escaped the notice of any foreigner resident in Canton.

蛟龍反: Káu lung fán. One-horned dragon turn.

"The one-horned dragon turns."

This movement furnishes the explanation of the phenomenon termed: 'earthquake.'

八卦辟邪: Pát kwá p'ik ts'e. Eight diagrams ward-off evil.

"The eight diagrams (combinations of long and short lines) ward off injurious influences."

Boards with the eight diagrams engraved thereon are nailed over doorways.

食社肉曉言語: Shik shé yuk hiu in ü. Eat Shé meat understands words phrases.

"If they eat of the Shé meat they will be able to speak."

This is spoken of the common bird known by the name, Liú Ko.

The 'Shé meat' refers to the offerings presented to the spirits of the Earth in the spring and autumn. The altars being erected on open spaces by the road-side, there is nothing to prevent these ubiquitous creatures partaking of the food of the gods.

銅銀使入門使回去則無損人: T'ung ngan shai yap mún shai úi hü tsak mò sün yan. Brass money use enter door use back go so no injure man.

"To pay out bad money that you have received does no harm."

蚊聲日夜蚊: Man shing yat yé man. Mosquito noise day night mosquitoes.

"With reference to the sound made by mosquitoes there are day and night mosquitoes."

It is said that the night mosquitoes sing, and that they bite more ferociously than those of the day.

舖尾尖要安個嶺: P'ò mi tsim iú on ko ling. Shop end pointed must place hill.

"If the back of the shop is narrow a mound must be built up."

A shop, the back of which is very narrow, is termed a Fu-tau shop, *i.e.* water-scoop shop. The water-scoop referred to, is that used by natives in throwing up water from ditches and streams into their rice fields. It has a tapering mouth, and the application of the name to the shop means that the tapering end of the shop scoops out its wealth into the adjoining yard.

A sloping mound of earth is piled up, and an idol placed thereon to counteract the "scooping out" tendency and thus save the business from being ruined by the unlucky shape of the place in which it is carried on.

白蟻食銀: Pák ngai shik ngan. "White ants eat silver."

When a Westerner has met these pests sufficiently frequently to appreciate their destructive powers, he begins to think there may be something in the phrase; but of this he is certain, that, though the saying may not be true literally, it is metaphorically.

題乩: T'ai ki. Suggest oracle.

"Fairies reveal things by planchette."

The most common form of planchette is a tray of lime over which is suspended a pencil fastened to the arm of a lever free to move in either direction as the fairy may direct in writing the desired revelation of the future.

能知過去未來: Nang chi kwo hü mi loi. Able know past gone, not-yet come.

"Knows the past and the future."

This is said of fortune-tellers and phrenologists.

飛來寺: Fé loi tsz. Flew came monastery.

"The monastery that flew hither."

This building, that many people really think flew from Ts'ing Ün, is situated near the Little North Gate of Canton city.

月老爲媒: Üt lò wai múi. Moon old-man is match-maker.

"The old man in the moon is the match-maker."

He, it is said, once came down to Earth having a large bundle of red string under his arm. Some one met him, and asked him what he wanted with so much red string. He replied: "To tie together the feet of boys and girls in pairs as they are born. When they grow up they come together."

撒荳成兵: Sát tau shing ping. "(You) plant beans, (and they) become soldiers."

葵扇風發暈人: Kw'ai shin fung p'út wan yan. Palm fan wind fans faint man.

"The breeze stirred by a palm-leaf fan makes a man giddy."

XXII.

TERMINOLOGY.

鐵石心腸: T'it shek sam ch'éung. Iron rock heart intestines.

"A heart of iron and bowels of rock."

尸位素餐: Shi wai sò ts'an.

"(A) corpse (in) office eating meals." A drone.

如魚失水: Ü ü shat shui. Like fish lose water.

"Like a fish out of water."

落錯脚: Lok ts'o kéuk. Put-down wrong foot. "Missed his calling."

鷄飛狗走: Kai fé kau tsau. Chickens fly dogs run. "A terrible upheaval."

不食羊肉一身臊: Pat shik yéung-yuk yat shan sò. Not eat sheep flesh whole body smells.

The Chinese consider that mutton has a peculiar odour, and therefore the phrase rendered in English is:

"Although a man may not participate in a wrong transaction with his friends, yet the odium of the deed rests upon him."

惹得一身蟻: Yé tak yat shan ngai. Bring-on get whole body ants.

"Get one's self into difficulties."

開口吸着利: Hoi hau k'ap-chéuk li. Open mouth bites tongue.

"He never opens his mouth but he snaps at you."

神憎鬼厭: Shan tsang kwai im. Spirits hate demons weary-of.

"A well-hated fellow;" or, "Generally detested."

腹中有劍: Fuk chung yau kim. Stomach middle have sword. "A dangerous man."

修短有數: Sau tün yau sho. Long-life premature-death have numbers." "A man's days are numbered."

富貴在天: Fú kwai tsoi t'in. Riches honour rest-with heaven.

"Wealth and honour are the gift of heaven."

守錢虜一文不出: Shau ts'in lò yat man pat ch'ut. Keep money captive one cash not put-out. "A miser."

酒囊飯袋: Tsau nong fán toi. Wine bag rice sack. "A good-for-nothing fellow."

玉石俱焚; Yuk shek k'ü fan. Jade-stone rock all burned.

"The innocent suffer with the guilty."

The good and the bad are lost together.

The reference is to political upheavals, insurrections, and civil wars.

草木皆兵: Ts'o muk kái ping. Grass tree all soldiers.

"He thinks the grasses and trees are all soldiers." He starts at his own shadow.

瓜田李下: Kwá t'in li há. Cucumber field plum-tree beneath.

"Do not touch your shoes in a cucumber field, nor your hat beneath the plum-trees."

Avoid the appearance of evil.

風馬牛: Fung má ngau. Wind horse buffalo

"Diametrically opposed."

The horse is supposed to run with and the buffalo against the wind.

石田無用: Shek t'in mò yung. Stone field no use. "As useless as a stony field."

問道于盲: Man tò ü mang. Ask way of blind. "Seek information at the wrong source."

班門弄斧: Pán-mun lung fú. Carpenter door play-with axe. "Betray one's ignorance before an expert."

尾大不掉: Mi tái pat cháu. Tail big not row. "His tail is so big he cannot wag it."

"An unmanageable ministry or retinue."

狗尾續貂: Kau mi tsuk tiú. Dog tail continue sable.

"Patch sable with dog's tail."

風颶打不脫: Fung-kau tá pat t'üt.

Typhoon strike not off.

"A typhoon could not blow it away."

Trials, difficulties, and troubles that cannot be escaped are thus described.

The phrase applies also to inseparable friends and habits contracted.

一頭霧水: Yat t'au mò shúi. Whole (one) head mist water.

"Altogether befogged."

昏天黑地: Fan t'in hák ti. Twilight sky black earth. "Utterly bewildered."

朝三暮四: Chiú sam mò sz. Morning three evening four. "Never alike two days together."

落井下石: Lok tsing há shek. Go-down well let-down stone.

"When a man is down keep him down."

文章說得不做得: Man-chéung shüt tak pat tsò tak. Composition-chapter talk can not do can.

"He can talk an essay, but cannot write one." This is said of men who cannot practice what they preach, and of those who cannot carry out their brilliant schemes.

戒口: Kái hau. Refrain-from mouth.

"An abstemious mouth."

Said of a person who eats not what is injurious, and who abstains from speaking evil.

坐田食宅: T'so t'in shik chák. Sit field eat house.

"He sits in his fields and eats his house."

Allowing for the inversion, this graphic sentence exactly hits off the gentleman farmer in China.

代庖代辦: Toi p'au toi pán. In-behalf-of cook in-behalf-of manage.

"Act as *locum tenens*."

坐井觀天; T'so tsing kún t'in. Sit-in (a) well look sky.

"A narrow outlook."

病入膏肓; Ping yap kò-fong. Sickness entered heart-region. "A hopeless case."

唾面自乾: T'o min tsz kon. Spit face self dry.

"If you spat on his face he would not wipe it."

An excellent tempered man.

剜肉醫瘡: Kwat yuk i ch'ong. Cut flesh heal ulcer.

"Cut out flesh to heal an ulcer."

This, with the Chinese, means a fruitless undertaking, since in the absence of antiseptic surgery each piece of flesh removed would leave an ugly wound needing the same treatment.

龍口: Lung hau. Dragon mouth.

"The dragon's mouth."

If the geomantic influences of a cemetery are good, that is, cause the descendants of

those interred therein to flourish, then that burial ground is honoured by the above designation.

金口之言: Kam hau chi in. Gold mouth its words.

"Golden mouth words."

This phrase, like **金*石之言**, is applied to sound advice, solid instruction.

釜中游魚: Fú chung yau ü. Pan middle swim fish.

"A fish swimming in the frying-pan."

He is on his last legs. It is his last fling.

靈菩薩: Ling p'ò-sát. "(A) prayer-answering idol."

英雄無用武之地: Ying-hung mò yung mò chi ti. Hero no use military-genius its place.

"A genius without opportunities to display his powers."

笑裡藏刀: Siú li ts'ong tò. Smile inside hides knife.

"His smile hides a dagger."

* Shek: rock.

XXIII.

WEATHER (ELEMENTS).

雷劈死人: Lúi p'ék sz yan. Thunder strikes dead men.

"Thunder strikes men dead."

The popular belief is that it is the thunder, and not the lightning, which kills those whom it strikes.

龍氣過: Lung hi kwo. Dragon breath passes. "The dragon's breath is passing."

Dragons are responsible for gales, typhoons, and cyclones either by snorting or by wagging their tails, and hence the Chinese saying is equivalent to the English: "It is blowing a gale."

雨係龍上水: Ü hai lung shéung shúi. Rain is dragon ascend water.

"Rain is water that the dragon has raised."

In the absence of scientific knowledge the action of the sun is attributed to a fabulous creature.

掘尾龍: Kwat mi lung. "(The) blunt-tailed dragon."

Whenever this mythical creature appears there are sure to be storms.

神誕雨: Shan tán ü. Idol birthday rain.

"It rains on idols' birthdays."

分龍雨處有處無: Fan lung ü ch'ü yau ch'ü mò. Divide dragons rain place have place have-not.

"When the dragons separate it rains in this place and not in that."

浸三旱七: Tsam sám hon ts'at. Flood three drought seven.

"If it's not a flood it's a drought."

Rendered more literally this phrase would be:

"We either have floods for three years or drought for seven."

雨濕土地衣要晒一百日: Ü shap T'ò-ti i iú shái yat pak yat. Rain wet Earth-god clothes need dry one hundred days.

"If the (paper) raiment of the Earth god

is made damp by rain then it will take a hundred days to dry it." This means that if it should rain on the 2nd of the 2nd moon, when the Earth god's garments are placed on the idol, which is always without cover, then the rainy season will last a long time

春寒不入肉: Ch'un hon pat yap yuk. Spring cold not enter flesh.

"The cold in Spring does not pierce to the bone."

好天搵埋落雨使: Hò t'in wan mái lok ü shai. Good sky find together descend rain use.

"Make hay while the sun shines."

"Lay by for a rainy day."

物極必反: Mat kik pit fán. Things extreme certainly turn.

"When things are at their worst there is sure to be a change."

XXIV.

WORSHIP.

敬月重敬日輕: King üt ch'ung king yat hing. Revere moon heavy revere sun light. "Men greatly revere the moon: but hold the sun in light esteem."

The sun represents the male principle, yéung, and the moon the female principle, yam, and hence the origin of this parabolic saying.

土地箱: T'ò ti séung. "Earth god's box."

This idol's birthday falls on the 2nd of the 2nd moon, and paper boxes containing paper money and clothes are burned for the idol's use.

月光衣: Üt-kwong i. "Moon clothes."

On the 15th of the 8th moon paper clothes are burnt in order that the person whose face is seen in that luminous body, the moon, may be supplied with raiment.

元寶灰重過身: Ün pó fúi ch'ung kwo shan. Ün pó ashes heavier than body.

"Ün Po (indented worship paper) ash becomes heavier than the body."

If a child is ill for a long time then the ash of the paper burned before the idol shrine with a view to the child's recovery, accumulates until its weight exceeds that of the child's body.

放鈔: Fong ch'áu. Loose paper-money.

"Burn (lit. let go) paper money."

This is the term applied to the custom of burning paper cash and incense at dark.

百解紙: Pak kái chi. Hundred remove paper.

"The paper that removes a hundred ills."

The panacea thus designated is only offered when the spirits of the Earth and Grain are worshipped.

搭棚拜蜘蛛: Táp p'áng pái chi-chü. Erect scaffold worship spiders.

"Scaffold builders worship spiders."

The Chinese Pantheon of deities contains every kind of creature that is supposed to have power to impart to the worshipper of its instinct, inherent qualities, and peculiar ability.

拜人祖宗; Pái yan tso-tsung. "Worship (other) men's ancestors."

What a travesty of what is supposed to be one of the most sacred religious acts performed by the Chinese! Thousands of dollars are sometimes paid to a graduate to come and worship at the ancestral shrine of a village, for by this act he acknowledges the villagers' ancestors to be his own, and thus binds himself to assist his adopted clan in some litigation case, which those, who have hired him to play the hypocrite, foresee is likely to involve them in trouble.

長壽香: Chéung-shau héung.

"Longevity incense."

Burned to the idols by those who specially desire long life.

未拜先食; Mi pái sin shik. Not worship first eat.

"Eat of the offering before presenting it to the idols."

To do so betrays a want of reverence.

燒猪謝車: Shiú chü tsé ch'é. Roast pig thank fire-engine.

"The fire-engine is thanked by an offering of roast pork."

There are four or five pumping-stations along the river front at Canton.

上油神獲福: Shèung yau shan wok fuk.

"If one presents oil (to the temple-keeper) the idol obtains happiness."

靈簽: Ling ts'im. Intelligent sticks.

"Intelligent divining sticks."

These are short bamboo slips on which are written prescriptions, or auguries. After burning incense the slips are shaken before the idol and one is picked out by the worshipper.

念經能招福: Nim king nang chiú fuk. Repeat prayers able brings happiness.

"To repeat Buddhist prayers brings happiness."

食鴨不能入主帥廟: Shik ap pat nang yap chü shúi miú. Eat duck not can enter Chü Shui temple.

"You cannot enter Chü Shui temple after having partaken of duck."

The reason for this prohibition is that General Hong, who was subsequently deified, was once saved by ducks destroying the foot-prints of his retreating soldiers.

梳粧盤: Sho chong p'ún. Comb paint tray.

"Toilet tray."

It is made of paper and burned for the use of the seven fairies on the 6th day of the 7th moon. The fairies are the spirits of the Pleiades.

[紙札能變眞物: Chi-chát nang pin chan mat. Paper-images able change true things.

"Productions in paper (for the use of the departed) can change into real articles."

The Chinese think the shades of the departed need money, sedan-chairs, opium pipes, servants, &c. as they did in this world, when they were in the flesh. Thousands of dollars are spent annually on paper images which are burnt in worship, in the belief that the articles are received by those for whom they are intended, and that not in the form of a flimsy fabrication but the genuine article required.

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